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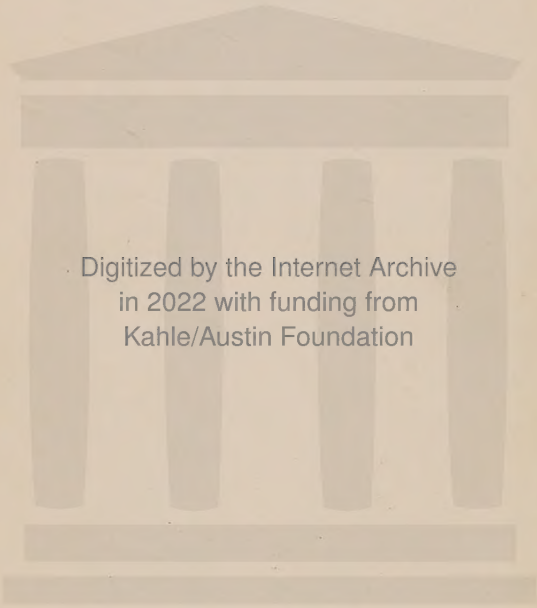
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THE BEGINNINGS OF ART

BY

ERNST GROSSE, PH. D.

WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT AND THREE PLATES

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The author of this book, Dr. Ernst Grosse, is a professor in the University of Freiburg in Baden. He is still a young man. He was born at Stendal, in the Altmark (Prussia), in 1862. From the *Gymnasium* of his native place he went to the Universities of Berlin, Munich, and Heidelberg, where he studied philosophy and the natural sciences. In 1887 he wrote a dissertation—*Die Literatur-Wissenschaft*—wherein he attempted to show the necessity and possibility of treating the history of poetry after the methods of the natural sciences. In 1890 his critical analysis of Herbert Spencer's doctrine of the Unknowable appeared; it was entitled *Lehre von dem Unkennbaren*, and secured its author admission to the philosophical lectureship at the University of Freiburg. At this institution Dr. Grosse has really not confined himself strictly to philosophical lines; he has rather specialized in the fields of ethnology and sociology. Among his courses of lectures have been the following: *General Ethnology*, *General Anthropology*, *Outlines of Sociology*, *Ethics*

from the Standpoint of Ethnology, *Forms of the Family*, *Art from a Sociological Standpoint*, *Pictorial Arts of Japan*, *Art of Lower Peoples*. In addition to his class lectures, Dr. Grosse conducts a *Seminarium*, in which a number of students are trained to conduct independent research in ethnology. Dr. Grosse is an instructor of unusual power, and is popular with his students, who quickly catch his earnestness and enthusiasm.

In the *Beginnings of Art*, Dr. Grosse enters into a new field and applies a new method. The results are more than encouraging. The book makes no claim to exhaust the subject, but aims to suggest and to incite other workers. To find "beginnings," Dr. Grosse confines his attention to the few most primitive peoples now living; he distinctly criticises those writers who have drawn illustrations of beginnings from peoples at every stage of culture. His criticism is just, though rather sweeping, for there can be no question that quite primitive conceptions are to be found among peoples well up the scale of culture, either as survivals or as undeveloped culture elements. Still, it is safer to do as Dr. Grosse does, and study only such material as is supplied by the lowest stage of culture to be found among existing tribes.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE present work is a pioneer effort, and should be judged as such. Whoever ventures upon a new region where nobody has made earnest explorations can not expect to find numerous and inestimable facts; but he must be satisfied if he only finds the way there. The value of this book lies less in the answers it gives than in the questions it raises. In any case, I hope that I may have done a service to my readers, especially to those who are not able to share my views, in having given my thoughts the briefest expression at my command.

ERNST GROSSE.

FREIBURG IN BADEN, *October 9, 1893.*

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER — PAGE

I.—THE AIM OF THE SCIENCE OF ART 1

History of art—Philosophy of art and science of art—The problem of the science of art—Its limits—Its value.

II.—THE WAY TO THE SCIENCE OF ART 9

The two forms of the problem of the science of art—The individual form and its difficulties—The social form—Its history—Dubos, Herder, Taine, Hennequin, Guyau—The old and the new methods—The comparative ethnological method—The study of primitive forms—Its difficulties—Collection and significance of the material.

III.—THE PRIMITIVE PEOPLES 32

The conception of primitive peoples in sociology and ethnology—Peoples and races—The significance of production to culture—Influence of production on the development of the family and of religion—The degeneration hypothesis — The primitive peoples of the present — Their culture.

IV.—ART 47

The nature of artistic activity—Art, play, and exercise—Art as a social phenomenon and a social function.—Classification of the arts.

V.—PERSONAL DECORATION 53

Decoration and clothing among the primitive peoples—Division of decoration—Body painting—Significance of colours—Fixed decoration—Scarification of the Australians and Mincopies and its meaning—The tattooing of the Bushmen and Eskimo—Ear, lip, and nose ornaments—Hair dressing—Movable decoration of the head, the neck, the loins—Loin

CHAPTER PAGE

decoration and the feeling of shame—Limb decoration—Decoration of clothing of the Eskimo—Fashion in the lowest grades of culture—Æsthetic value of primitive dress decoration—Lustre, colours, forms, symmetry, and eurhythmy—Associations—Decoration of primitive and civilized peoples—Practical significance of decoration—attractive dress and terrifying dress—Relation of male and female ornament—Meaning of ornament among the higher peoples—Ornament as a mark of rank—Duration and change of fashions in dress ornament—The future of dress ornament.

VI.—Ornamentation 115

Ornamentation of implements in the lowest degrees of culture—The "geometrical pattern" of primitive ornamentation—The sources of ornamentation—Natural motives—Technical motives—Original meaning of primitive ornament—Inscriptions, property marks, tribal symbols, religious symbols—Imitations of technical motives—Primary and secondary ornaments—Æsthetical significance of writing—Æsthetical value of primitive ornaments—Influence of primitive culture on ornamentation—Influence of primitive ornamentation on culture.

VII.—Representative art 163

Pictorial works from the reindeer period—Cave paintings, rock carvings and bark drawings of the Australians—Paintings of the Bushmen—Pictorial work of the hyperboreans; drawings and carvings—The masks of the south western Eskimo—Diffusion of pictorial talent among the hunting peoples—Pictorial art of primitive peoples and pictorial art of children—Primitive pictorial art and primitive production—Relation to religion—Pictures and picture writing—Practical significance of pictorial art.

VIII.—The dance 207

Kinds of primitive dances—Gymnastic dances—Mimetic dances—Æsthetic value—Religious dances—The social significance of primitive dances—Decline of the art of dancing—The modern dance.

IX.—Poetry 232

Quantitative and qualitative lack of material—Nature of poetry—Spencer's undifferentiated primitive poetry—The primitive lyric—Examples—Contents and form—General

CHAPTER PAGE

character—Value of the primitive lyric for poet and public —Lyric and music—The primitive epic—Poetical narration, historical tradition, and scientific myth—Compass of primitive epics—Content—Treatment and characters—Animal stories of the Bushmen—Märchen of the Eskimo—The history of little Kagsagsuk—Foreign influence—The primitive drama—Its two sources—A pantomime of the Aleuts—An Australian moral piece—Social significance of poetry.

X.—Music 278

Connection of music with the dance and poetry—The two views on the nature and origin of music—Schopenhauer and Spencer—Matter and form of music—Primitive vocal music —Primitive instrumental music—General character of primitive music—Primitive music and Spencer's speech theory—Darwin on the first development of musical talent—Development of rhythm and harmony —Peculiar influence of music —Practical significance of music—Martial and dancing music —Essential significance of music—Music and culture.

XI.—Conclusion 305

Retrospect—Nature of primitive art—Its conditions—Its effects—Art as a means in the struggle for existence—Social and individual significance of art.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

FIG.		PAGE
1.	Australian scratched Designs from Shields and Clubs. (After Brough Smyth.)	117
2.	Ornaments of the Karaya. (After Ehrenreich.)	119
3.	Ornaments of the Karaya. (After Ehrenreich.)	121
4.	Shield from South Australia (after Eyre), and Shield from Queensland (Berlin Museum)	122
5.	Australian Shields from Victoria, with scratched Designs. (After Brough Smyth.)	124
6.	Australian Throw-stick, with a Map of the Country scratched on it. (After Brough Smyth.)	125
7.	Ornaments of the Mincopies. (From Man.)	126
8.	Bone Implements of the Eskimo, with Animal Ornaments. (After Jacobsen.)	127
9.	Bone Implements of the Eskimo in the Form of Animals. (After Jacobsen.)	128
10.	Bone Implements of the Eskimo, with Ornaments from Technical Motives. (From photographs.)	129
11.	Ornamental Details of Bone Implements of the Eskimo. (From photographs.)	130
12.	Potsherds from the Andaman Islands. (After Man.)	131
13.	Australian Spear, with Technic Ornament. (After Brough Smyth.)	132
14.	A Message Stick (after Howitt) and a Shield from Australia	134
15.	An Indian Picture-writing Sign for a Lapse of Time (after Mallery), and a Drill Bow of the Eskimo (from a photograph)	136
16.	Property Marks. (After Lartet, Christy, and Choris)	138

FIG. PAGE
17. Mincopy Girdle. (After Man.) 148
18. Australian Shields. (After Brough Smyth.) . . . 152
19. Dagger-Handle of Reindeer Horn. (From a cast.) . . 164
20. Australian Cave Painting at Glenelg. (After Grey.) . . 166
21. Australian Cave Painting at Glenelg. (After Grey.) . . 167
22. Australian Cave Painting at Glenelg. (After Grey.) . . 169
23. Australian Rock Sculptures on Depuch Island. (After Stokes.) 171
24. Australian Drawing. (After Brough Smyth.) . . . 176
25. Australian Grave Tablet of Bark. (After Brough Smyth.) . 177
26. Rock Drawings of the Bushmen. (After Fritsch.) . . 182
27. Carving by an Eskimo on a piece of Walrus Tusk . . 186
28. Drawing by a Tchukchi. (After Hildebrand.) . . . 187
29. Hyperborean Bone Carvings. (After Hildebrand.) . . 188
30. Aleut Carvings on Bones. (After Hildebrand.) . . . 189
31. Bone Carvings of the Eskimo. (After Boas.) . . . 191
32. Picture Writing from Alaska. (After Mallery.) . . . 202

FULL-PAGE PLATES.

PLATE I.—Australian Bark Drawing. (After Andrée.)
PLATE II.—Pen Drawing by an Australian. (After Andrée.)
PLATE III.—A Cave Painting of the Bushmen. (After Andrée.)

THE BEGINNINGS OF ART.

CHAPTER I.

THE AIM OF THE SCIENCE OF ART.

In the multitude of researches and essays on art—art in the wide sense, including not only the representative arts in all their branches but all the arts of æsthetic creation—two lines of work are distinguishable, which may be designated the history of art and the philosophy of art. The two courses only rarely diverge far apart; but on this very account it is necessary to make the distinction between them clear.

The history of art examines the historical data in the development of art and artists. It clears tradition from all questionable and false features, and tries to unite the elements that are shown to be trustworthy into as correct and clear a picture as possible. Its task consists not so much in the elucidation as in the investigation and statement of the facts; but a work which contents itself with establishing and combining single facts, be they ever so fundamental and comprehensive, can never satisfy the spirit of inquiry; and the study has already taken in, besides the review of the history of art, general considerations concerning the nature,

conditions, and objects of art. These considerations, whether disjointed or presented in systematic order, represent the two courses which we have defined as the history and the philosophy of art. The history and the philosophy of art together form what is now designated the science of art.

Our age has used the word "science" so carelessly that it seems prudent to test the claim of the "science of art" to that title of honour before recognising it. The office of a science is the presentation and explanation of a definite group of phenomena. Every science is accordingly divided into two branches—a descriptive branch, which investigates the actual conditions in their specific character and sets them forth, and an explanatory branch, which refers them back to general laws. The two branches are mutually dependent one upon the other. The figure with which Kant expressed the relation of perception and conception applies to them. Facts without theories are delusive; theories without facts are vain. Does the "science of art" fulfil the requirements which we have a right to make of a science? So far as the first part of its office is concerned, the question may be answered in the affirmative.

The reproach might be cast against the present history of art that it has made the field of its research too narrow, and has shown preference for the art of West-European civilization to the neglect of foreign arts; but the reproach does not affect its scientific character, for the scientific character of a work is not determined by its extent but by its method. The method of research in the history of art is not less conformed to scientific principles than the method of any other branch of culturistic or scientific study. Still, a scientific history of

art is not a science of art. It has as little right to that name as a pile of building stones has to the name of building. The pile does not become a building until the several stones have been arranged in fixed architectural order. And knowledge of the history of art does not become a science of art till the individual facts have been grouped in logical connection. The question arises whether the branch of the philosophy of art is adequate to this purpose. Attempts at a philosophy of art in the narrower sense have hitherto been nearly always pursued in immediate connection with certain speculative philosophical systems. They have for a little while obtained with these a more or less extensive acceptation, and after a short time they have sunk into a common oblivion. It is not our purpose here to pass judgment on the general value of these speculations. If we measure them by the strict standard of science, we shall have to admit that they deserved their fate. We may admire their brilliancy, but we can not on that account fail to see that the foundation of facts was not sufficient for these tottering constructions, and afforded very little security for their permanence. The philosophy of art of the Hegelians and the Herbartians has to-day only a historical interest. Our conception of the philosophy of art comprises, however, far more: it includes also all those works which in current speech are called critical rather than philosophical. While in the former case we have to do with perfected systems, we deal in this instance only with more or less fragmentary deductions and indications. Nevertheless, those art-critical fragments usually bear the same majestic appearance of inerrancy as marks the philosophical systems. We are

consequently somewhat surprised when we perceive that the views of several critics concerning the nature, the conditions, and the objects of art not only differ widely, but that most of the dogmas assuming to be raised above all doubt are irreconcilably contradictory of one another. But this surprise quickly passes away, for, if we subject any one of these art critics to a closer examination, we find in every case that his opinions and dogmas are not based on any objective scientific researches and considerations, but upon an uncertain subjective fancy which depends upon quite other than pure scientific motives. Of course, we have no thought of denying the value of art criticism. Its very prevalence is sufficient evidence that it answers to a demand. But a work can be very valuable indeed without for that reason possessing the least scientific merit. The exclamations of an emotional lover of Nature over the beauties of the world of plants may be in many respects highly edifying and interesting; but they can not, for all that, take the place of the investigations of a botanist. It is under some circumstances very profitable and pleasant to know the subjective thoughts of a brilliant man on art; but when it is attempted to impress them upon us as scientifically founded and valid knowledge, we must decisively repel the claim. The essential principle of investigation is always and everywhere the same. No matter whether the inquiry concerns a plant or a work of art, it must in any instance be objective. It is no doubt much easier to maintain the requisite cool calmness in the presence of a plant than before a work of art that appeals immediately to our feelings; but if we are to have a science of art we must maintain it. In science the objective

reigns; in art criticism the subjective. Art criticism assumes to give laws; science is contented to find laws. The principle and the object of the two are fundamentally different, and we must not be confused over their antithesis. The reason for the existence of art criticism need not be attacked, but, if it would wear the lion's skin of science, it should see that the skin covers the ears.

Neither the philosophy of art nor art criticism is as yet competent to account satisfactorily for the facts of the history of art. Aside from a few isolated essays, to which we shall refer hereafter, it must be conceded that we have no right to boast of a science of art. Through the industry of the historians of art, however, a considerable portion of the material for the structure has been collected. Yet, valuable as their labours may prove to be when they are scientifically applied, if they are allowed to remain unemployed they will be worse than useless. The proverb, "What one does not use is a heavy load," applies as well to intellectual as to material possessions; and it is pre-eminently appropriate in our age, which is so prone to forget the object in contemplating the means. Facts are only the means to knowledge; otherwise the accumulation of them smothers thought. We may pile up mountains of facts with the only result that they will shut out light and air from the mind. Nothing can give order and value to this waste of isolated facts in the history of art but laws, and laws are the one thing that is not sought.

It is indeed high time for the work to begin, for it will not be short or easy. Even the simplest sociological problem is a very complicated one, and the problem of the science of art in particular is subject to difficul-

ties which it is easier to underestimate than to exaggerate.

It is right, before entering upon so toilsome and tedious an undertaking, to ask what object it will serve. Perhaps, however, in the present case it will be of more profit if we make clear what objects it can not serve. In this way we may guard ourselves against illusions, and science against false accusations. As we look for an El Dorado in every newly discovered country, so we are apt to expect from every new science all possible theoretical and practical marvels, the solution of all mysteries, and the cure of all ills. When, then, after a little while we learn that the new land is, after all, only a part of this earth, not much better or much worse than the old, and that the new science is, after all, only a science, we are apt to comfort ourselves for the former overestimation by a commensurate depreciation. The first thing which we would be likely to demand of a science of art would be a means of setting the order for a development of art according to our desire—a kind of formula for invoking an artificial blossoming of art in a naturally unproductive age. It is, unfortunately, very doubtful whether the science of art could practically fulfil such hopes. If we were to judge from the fruits of the other branches of sociology, we might perhaps, on the contrary, be convinced that the factors on which the life of art depends are so manifold and so intangible that possibly no disadvantage would accrue, at least to art, if we did not interfere. We need not, however, be concerned for fear that such an acknowledgment would embarrass active efforts to ennoble art through civil and academic instruction. The influence of sociological theory on social practice has, so far at

least, been so slight that a practical social polity can only be wished for.

The immediate purpose of science is not practical effect, but theoretical knowledge; and the primary object of the science of art is not the application, but the knowledge of the laws that control the life and development of art. This aim, however, for which the science of art must strive, is only an ideal that can never be reached. When we require it to explain any phenomenon within its domain in all its details down to the fundamental principle, we make a demand which no science can fulfil. As it is impossible for the botanist to trace back the special form of any plant, point by point, to its primary causes, so it is impossible for the art student to show why a work of art is, down to its finest feature, just what it is and nothing else, not because the details are the caprice of an incomprehensible and arbitrary fancy, but because our faculties are not sufficient for the comprehension of the multitude of the normally operating factors, which in any given case are infinite. We can not get to the bottom of anything, because nothing has a bottom. Science has to content itself with demonstrating the normal sequence of phenomena in the general aspects; but it can content itself with that. We are convinced of the perfect regularity of things, and remain so even when it can not be fully shown forth. The conviction of the universal regularity and comprehensibility of all phenomena is in no way based on any empirical researches; but, on the other hand, all research is based on this *a priori* maxim. If the science of art has taught us one of the laws that reign in the seemingly incalculable and capricious development of art, it has done all that can be asked of

it. It has won a new province from the barren sea of vague speculation, on which ground the human mind can secure a firm footing, and sow and reap. A piece of tillable ground is indeed a poor substitute for the mysterious treasures which the old art philosophers promised their adepts. A scientific explanation is, however, no metaphysical illumination; it remains on the empirical surface of things, and does not penetrate into the transcendent depths. The science of art has completed its message when it has shown that regular and fixed relations exist between certain forms of culture and art; and when the philosophy of art asks it concerning the inner substance of these forms and relations, concerning the forces that are manifested in the progress of the history of art, it is obliged to confess squarely that it not only can not answer these questions, but can not even understand them.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAY TO THE SCIENCE OF ART.

The problem of the science of art is the description and explanation of those phenomena which are comprehended in the conception of art. This problem has two forms—an individual and a social. In the former case we are concerned with the study of a single work or the life work of a single artist, with the demonstration of the normal relations that exist between an individual artist and his individual work, and with the explanation of the artistic creation as the normal product of an artistic individuality working under certain conditions. Individual manifestations are, for the most of us, far more interesting than social ones, especially in art, where the individuality is so important; and consequently most of us have heretofore studied individual forms of the problem, although we might have assured ourselves from the beginning that the prospect of a successful result was very slight. The individual form of this problem is, in fact, capable of solution only for a small minority of cases, all of which are of the last one hundred years. In every other instance the most patient labour and the most penetrating scrutiny will invariably be wasted on the entirely inaccessible materials of individual art history.

Rembrandt died in Amsterdam in 1669, two hundred years ago; but we know so little of the life of the master, who stood for many years in the light of a European fame, that a dispute was recently possible as to whether Rembrandt was really the author of the works that will bear his name into the farthest future. The greatest English poet has had to share the same fate as the greatest Dutch master. It helps us very little at the bottom, however, to know that not Lord Bacon, but William Shakespeare, wrote Hamlet. Who was Shakespeare? The son of a citizen of an English country town, who was punished for poaching, married in his nineteenth year, left his family shortly afterward and went to London, where he lived first as a player and afterward as a co-proprietor of a theatre, returned at fifty years of age to his native town, and died not long afterward. Further than this we know that he was a true friend and a genial companion. In spite of all our researches we do not know so much of the life of the great poet as we do of the stranger with whom we have spent an hour at table. Yet we know much more of him than of his associates. The "biographies" of the Elizabethan dramatists are like the epitaphs which we read on the broken tombstones of an old churchyard. The most certain things we know of the most of them are the dates of the registries of their births and deaths. In an old parish register of St. Saviour's Church we find under the date of March 20, 1639, the laconic notice, "Buried, Philip Massinger, a stranger." This "stranger," of whose life we know nothing further than that he was born in 1584, the son of a servant, was taught from 1602 to 1606 in St. Alban's Hall at Oxford, and that he once, when in "unfortunate extremi-

ties," went to the pawnbroker Henslowe for a loan of five pounds, was the author of The Duke of Milan and The Fatal Dowry. An entry in the account book of the same Henslowe is all—except his works and his name—that is left of the history of John Webster, creator of the terrible Duchess of Malfi. They have all disappeared in the deep, silent darkness, of which they dreamed so often and gruesomely.

> Where nothing is but all oblivion,
> Dust and an endless darkness.

We find it darker and more silent with each step we take further into the past. Who was the master of the Altar of Isenheim, that most happy work of German genius in painting? Who was Matthias Grünewald? "It is to be lamented," wrote Sandrart, "that this extraordinary man and his works have been so far forgotten that I do not know of a person living who could give me a line or a word concerning what he did." The great epics of the Middle Ages have been compared to their cathedrals; they resemble those piles also, in that their masters are unknown. Occasionally a name and a pair of half-effaced dates can be found on a stone, but that is all. Who was Erwin van Steinbach? Who was Gottfried von Strassburg? Who was Wolfram von Eschenbach? Who was the poet of the Gudrun? Who was the poet of the Niebelungenlied? The art works of antiquity have been partly lifted out of their graves, but the artists lie forever buried under the rubbish of centuries. How scanty and indefinite is all that the most toilsome inquiry has brought to light concerning the characters and careers of the great Grecian and Roman masters! One could

more easily restore a lost statue from a few mutilated fragments than reconstruct the picture of a rich artistic life out of such meagre accounts. As we go further back, even the names disappear. In the presence of the gigantic structures and sculptures of the Central American peoples, or the Polynesian songs of heroes and gods, or the cave paintings of the Bushmen, everywhere we search in vain for the individual artists; we see only the mass of the peoples, out of which no single figure is recognisable. In all these cases—and they form the immense majority—the problem of the science of art is solvable only in its second or social form. As it is impossible to illustrate the individual character of an art work from the individual character of an artist, we can only undertake to relate the aggregated character of the art groups of a period or a district to a whole people or a whole age. The first form of the problem is psychological, the second sociological.

The sociological form of the problem of the science of art has been set up and worked at for a long time. The first person who tried to account for art as a social phenomenon was the Abbé Dubos, who started the inquiry into the causes of the different artistic talents of different peoples and different ages, in 1719, in his *Réflexiones critiques sur la poésie et la peinture.* If we smile at this author's simplicity when he finds the cause to be the air, we forget perhaps that the modern answer really tells not much more, although it has substituted the nobler *climate* of exact science for the *air* of Dubos. A new word is not a new fact. A half century after Dubos, Herder took up the problem with enthusiasm. If it had been possible to give a scientific solution he would have succeeded. His writings are

full of general thoughts on the influence of national character and climate upon poetry. But his ideas stride along so fast that he never has time to define a fact clearly and establish it. The value of his work lies not in his investigations, but in the stimulus he gives; in this case, however, his words kindled no fire. His desires were too little in accord with the needs of his contemporaries. Instead of building a science of art on broad ethnological foundations, as Herder had imagined it, the Germans let the airy construction of speculative philosophy rise into the clouds.

The next essay toward a sociology of art was, after a long pause, made in France. Taine has been sometimes honoured as the founder of sociological art researches, but neither his conception nor his solution of the problem gives him a right to such fame. He rises above his predecessors only by purely external excellence. His conception seems to be extremely clear, but it is not. The clearness of the form only serves to hide the obscurity of the content. Taine's deductions culminate in the famous phrase which he utters as a law: "*L'œuvre d'art est determinée par un ensemble qui est l'état général de l'esprit et des mœurs environnantes*" (The work of art is determined by a whole which is the general condition of mind and of surrounding customs). This "general condition" constitutes the *température morale*, or moral temperature, which has the same significance for the development of art as the *température physique* or physical temperature for the development of flora. Art, however, owes not its origin, but its character, to the moral temperature. About the same number of persons inclined to art are born in every period. But of this number only those attain develop-

ment whose life and works are adapted to the existing moral temperature, the expression of which is the prevailing taste. The rest go to the background or utterly fail. The development of art, too, is accomplished under the great law of natural selection. If we study the moral temperature more closely, we shall find three elements by the co-operation of which it originates—the race, the climate, and the period; or the sum of the cultural products already present. Hennequin has very easily shown, in his Critique Scientifique, that all the notions which Taine played with as coolly as a juggler with his balls, are extremely questionable fabrications. The peculiar character of a national art is supposed to depend, first, on the peculiar race character of the nation. But this peculiar race character, the existence of which Taine assumes to be self-evident, really can not be discovered. Not only is it wanting among the great civilized peoples of whom Taine speaks, but it has never been found among the savage peoples. Equally untenable are the propositions concerning climate and its influence on the character of the artist. Taine, indeed, does not explain what he means by the term climate; but he, nevertheless, assumes most decidedly that a particular form of his undefined climate will impress a peculiar, definite stamp upon the artists, and consequently upon their works. We must admire the boldness of this assertion when we recollect that, for example, Chateaubriand and Flaubert were both natives of the same part of northern France, Burns and Carlyle of the Highlands of Scotland, Shakespeare as well as Wycherley and Shelley and Browning and Swinburne and Dickens and Kipling of the English climate, and Haller as well as Meyer and Keller and Boecklin of German Switzer-

land. Finally, the peculiar taste of the public is supposed to affect the development of art through a kind of natural selection. But there is no more unity of taste than unity of race among any people. "In a *milieu*," says Hennequin, "that seems to possess a very definite physiognomy—great excitability and high emotional susceptibility—in Paris of the present time, romance has room for Feuillet and Goncourt, Zola and Ohnet; story-telling for Halévy and Villiers de l'Isle Adam; poetry for Leconte de l'Isle and Verlaine; criticism for Sarcey and Taine and Renan; comedy for Labiche and Becque; painting for Cabanel and Puvis de Chavanne, for Moreau and Redon, Raffaelli and Hébert; music for César Franck and Gounod and Offenbach." * Above all, however, Taine overlooks the fact that art not passively only but actively opposes taste. While the artist is to a certain extent taught by the public, the public is in a far higher degree taught by the artist. The relations are really the direct reverse of those predicated in the Philosophy of Art. Were Beethoven's symphonies at all adapted to the musical knowledge of the good-natured Viennese? Was Goethe's Faust intended to be the tea-table companion of the fashionable æsthetic clubs of its time? Did Boecklin's painting correspond with the prevailing taste of the German public? Nearly every great work of art is created not conformably to, but against, the prevailing taste. Nearly every great artist is not chosen but rejected by the public, and it is indeed not the fault of the public that he survives in the struggle for existence. Great art has always been a princess by

* Hennequin. La Critique scientifique, 116.

the grace of God, and not a servant by the grace of the mob. That art which the prevailing taste actually selects and supports would hardly have moved Taine to write a Philosophy of Art. There has, however, always been an art that prostituted itself to the public, and at no time has it carried on its trade so extensively and with such success as in this enlightened democratic epoch, which has brought forth the operetta, the farce, and the sensational novel. From the playhouse to the tingle-tangle variety show—in this way is art improved by the prevailing taste. In fact, if Taine had wished to write a satire on a certain form of Darwinism, he could not have conceived a crueller one than his application of the law of natural selection to the development of art. We shall see, however, that the art of a people depends on its civilization, and that certain forms of culture forbid certain forms of art and favour others. But, in the first place, this influence does not proceed from the prevailing taste; and, in the second place, it is not of such a character as to justify us in accounting for the whole development of art by natural selection. The grounds on which Taine bases his conclusions are wholly untenable. The worth of his "laws" is therefore self-evident. Taine's Philosophy of Art is a typical production of the so-called exact research which is all the time entering further and more boldly into all the fields of mental science, while it dresses its most trivial thoughts, wherever it is possible, in mathematical vesture, as psychological or sociological laws.* Truly, the young science of art has every

* Taine's Philosophie d'Art, 1865. Histoire de la littérature Anglaise. Essais, 1858. Preface. We expressly remark that our con-

reason to defend itself vigorously against devices of this sort.

Hennequin has done a great service to our science by his noble criticism of Taine. Further than this, his Critique scientifique is as good and as bad a methodics as a methodics of a science of the future can be; but it is nothing more. While Hennequin purified the science of art, Guyau strove further to perfect it.* Art is a function of the social organism which possesses the highest importance for its maintenance as well as for its further development—*that* is the thought with which he is filled, and which he expresses with uncommon eloquence. Guyau is like Herder in the movement of his thought and in his language. He resembles Herder, too, in asserting more than he proves. His deductions, as a rule, leave a feeling that they may be true. But in science we can not be satisfied with that feeling; we require the certainty of a clear insight, which can be obtained only through an exhaustive and comprehensive study. Guyau's studies are anything but comprehensive. They never extend beyond the regions of art which lie nearest to him in space and time. We do not say that his views have on that account no general validity; but we can not conceal from ourselves the fact that they lack a sufficiently broad basis. Perhaps Guyau would himself have remedied the defect; but his work ended at an age when that of others usually begins. He died as young as did Hen-

demnation applies only to these writings on the theory of art, and not at all to Taine's later historical works, for the masterly character of which we have a genuine admiration.

* Guyau. Problêmes esthétiques. L'Art au point du vue sociologique.

nequin, and the science of art lost in him one of its best men.

When we survey the results of sociological research in the field of art, we have to concede that they are modest enough. The number of investigators who have devoted themselves to the sociology of art is relatively very small; the field is incontestably a little neglected. This scientific neglect is the natural result of the general depreciation of art which characterizes our age, with all its museums, theatres, exhibitions, and criticism. To the bulk of men art is an idle pastime, good enough to occupy a leisure hour, but, like play without productive result, of no worth for the earnest and real problems of life. A theoretical consideration of art must, moreover, appear to our practical earnestness a doubly trivial pursuit, as a playing with a play, and entirely unworthy of a right-minded man. If this prejudice had not been so strong, the science of art would long ago have shown how vain it is. It is, indeed, no play to make this demonstration, for art is not the simplest and most comprehensible of the complicated phenomena of social life. Yet sociology has already solved other problems in which it had to contend with no slighter objective difficulties and with far stronger prejudices. If it has been possible to cast some light on the nature and development of religion, morals, and law, why is the nature and life of art still in the dark? We answer, because the science of art still holds to a wrong method, and because it still limits itself to an insufficient material. In all other fields of sociology the lesson has been learned to begin at the beginning. We study first the simplest forms of social phenomena, and do not attempt to explain the more complicated

ones till we have informed ourselves concerning the nature and condition of these simple forms. The science of religion begins, not with the consideration of the most highly developed and complicated systems of civilized peoples, not with Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity, but with the primitive beliefs in ghosts and demons of the rudest tribes. There was, however, a time when another course was followed here, too, and in that time the principles of the science of religion were involved in the same confusion as now prevails in the teachings of the science of art. Since then all sociological studies have been gradually turned into new ways; the science of art alone still wanders with upraised head in the old labyrinths. All the other branches have recognized how powerful and indispensable a helper to the science of culture has arisen in ethnology; only the science of art still disdains to honour with a glance the rude productions of the primitive peoples which ethnology spreads out before it. Its backwardness has become even more marked in the course of time. Dubos brought the art of the Mexicans and Peruvians, so far as it was accessible to him, within the circle of his comparative view. Herder collected the inconspicuous flowers of foreign and native popular poetry. But Taine, who had access to incomparably richer material than his predecessors, speaks exclusively of the art of the civilized nations of Europe, and, indeed, as if there were no other art anywhere. His critic, Hennequin, is fully at one with him on this point. The title which Guyau gave to his last book—Art from the Sociological Point of View—would lead us to anticipate a change of method toward our acceptation, for sociology in its present stage engages itself

with primitive forms before all others; but the art which Guyau considers from the sociological point of view is French art of the nineteenth century. In this respect his outlook is much more limited than Taine's. Can the theories which one can build on so arbitrarily limited a foundation be of any general validity? What would a general theory of propagation be worth if it were based exclusively on a study of the dominant forms among the mammalia? The field to which the science of art has heretofore devoted its work may be the most interesting to the great public; but it is, or at least has been, by no means the most fruitful for science. Nobody asks the science of art to renounce the study of the highest and most richly developed forms of art. On the contrary, these heights are and will continue to be the ultimate aim to which it looks. Heights are, however, not reached by flight, but only by climbing, and in climbing we must begin at the bottom, even at the risk that a science of art which deals with the monotonous songs and the monotonous ornaments of wretched savages will not at once excite that general interest upon which bold and original utterances on the art of the present and the future can always depend. We are speaking here of a demand which one may miss hearing, but can never put away. When Dubos and Herder suggested the ethnological method, rather than applied it, they were excusable because the facts were not within reach of their time. But there is no excuse whatever in our time for a student who constructs theories of art without recognising that European art is not the only art. An ethnological museum is open in nearly every large city; a constantly expanding literature carries the knowledge of the productions of foreign

tribes by description and picture into the widest circles, and yet the science of art remains as it was. It can, however, no longer ignore ethnological material unless it wishes to ignore it.

The science of art should extend its researches to all peoples; but especially should it apply itself to those groups which it has heretofore most neglected. All forms of art have in themselves an equal claim on its interest, but under present conditions all the forms do not promise the same success to the student. The science of art is not now in a position to solve the problem in its most difficult form. If we are ever to attain a scientific knowledge of the art of civilized peoples, it will be after we have first investigated the nature and condition of the art of savages. We have to learn the multiplication table before we can solve the problems of the higher mathematics. The first and most pressing task of the social science of art lies, therefore, in the study of the primitive art of primitive peoples. In order to compass this object, the study of the science of art should not turn to history or pre-history, but to ethnology. History knows no primitive peoples. The childish ideas which the Greeks of Homer and the Germans of Tacitus had of the peoples of primeval times are not worthy of contradiction. It is nevertheless a very suggestive thought that we have received our best information concerning the original forms of art from archæology. Yet all which archæology can show us is a mass of more or less fragmentary productions of prehistoric representative art. Most of these prehistoric ornaments and figures have in fact a much more primeval character than works of the historical period. But in order to decide whether we really have the primitive forms

we are looking for, we evidently must know the forms of culture in which they arose. We ask, but the answers are always indefinite and often contradictory, and after we have studied a few dozen of the most famous books on prehistoric culture, we shut the last, resigned to the conviction that prehistoric archæology is the Romance of Sociology. Neither history nor archæology being able to give us information, only ethnology is left; and in it we find what we are seeking. We shall see hereafter that ethnology is able to show us a whole series of primitive peoples in the bright light of the present. The ethnological method is, nevertheless, not perfect. The first difficulty the study of the arts of primitive peoples has to meet lies in the collection of the material. A great deal has certainly been done in this line during the last ten years, but quite as much remains to be done. While we are relatively well acquainted with the poetry of the Australians, we have only two or three songs of the savages of the Andaman Islands, and not a line of the songs of the Fuegians has been reported. Even less is our knowledge of primitive music. We gain no conception of it from general sketches and descriptions, and we generally get a false one from the transcriptions of primitive melodies that are given us; for the music of the primitive peoples does not move in the intervals to which we are accustomed, and can not be written down by our system of notation. The student of plastic and graphic art is in a better position. Rich stores of material lie accumulated in the ethnological museums, and where the originals are wanting copies take their place. Yet even when the primitive art works are well arranged and properly displayed in the transparent glass cases of the

museum, it is not always easy to find them out. In the Australian division of most collections may be seen long wooden staves indented with combinations of points and lines. These figures can hardly be distinguished at first sight from the familiar designs on the Australian clubs and shields which have usually been described as ornaments. Yet there is an essential difference between them. We have recently learned that the supposed ornaments on those staves are really a kind of rude writing—marks to help the messenger, to whom the staff is given to take with him, recollect the most important points of his commission; they have, therefore, not an æsthetic but a practical significance. In this case our knowledge saves us from a mistake; but in how many others does it leave us in the lurch! Who can assure us that the figures on the Australian shields are really ornaments? May they not just as probably be marks of ownership or tribal emblems; or may we, lastly, regard them as religious symbols? Questions of this kind present themselves in regard to most of the ornaments of primitive peoples, and can be answered for only extremely few. Can such insecure ground afford the safest foundation for the whole structure of the science of art? Is not this already a difficulty great enough fully to justify the neglect of primitive art? We have said that it is primarily necessary to study the art works of the lowest peoples, and now we have to confess that it is never possible to distinguish them with certainty: very much as some psychologists who first declare their belief that the life of the soul is composed of individual sensations, and then turn round and demonstrate that there can not be any individual sensations.

Fortunately, our situation is not so hard that we have to invoke exact psychology. First, we can show against the multitude of doubtful cases a number always considerable, the purely æsthetic significance of which can not be questioned. Then even the doubtful cases are not without value for the science of art. The birds' heads on the prows of the Papuan canoes may be first religious symbols, but they certainly serve secondarily as decorations. While the choice of an ornamental motive may be determined by a religious interest, its execution and its combination with other similar or dissimilar motives into a design are carried out under the influence of æsthetic requirements. We may demonstrate that the figures on the Australian shields are property marks or tribal emblems, but we do not thereby prove that they are not works of art. It would, on the contrary, be unaccountable if they were not. Why should the primitive man, to whom æsthetic needs are no more foreign than to civilized man, not try to make his marks and his symbols as pleasing as possible? It is true that other than æsthetic considerations may be regarded in the execution of a motive. It is conceivable, for example, that the New Zealander gives his ornamental figures ill-proportioned forms, not because his æsthetic faculties are imperfectly developed in that direction, but because he follows, in all its rudeness, an ancient fixed conventional model, with the idea perhaps that the magical power of the figure is in some way associated with its traditional form. Many similar instances may be found in our own religious art. Under the circumstances the execution of the figures does not permit any certain conclusion as to the æsthetic endowment of the New Zealanders. Happily, we are not in

this, or in most of the other cases, limited to a single group of ornamental motives. We can compare the human figures of the Maori with their other pictorial works; and if this comparison should result in showing that the New Zealander manifests the same incapacity for comprehending and representing natural forms and relations, not only in his human figures but in all other pictorial works, we should then have sufficient justification for drawing a conclusion respecting his æsthetic faculty.

The science of art is in the same position as all the other sciences that depend on observation. A single phenomenon proves little or nothing; the truth finally emerges out of the patient comparison of numerous and various facts. Most of the material which ethnology affords has no purely æsthetic character; but, while this is a disadvantage, it is not one peculiar to the science of art. Every science regards only one side of things, while every thing has many sides.

Having defined the æsthetic character of a primitive work in its general features, we come to the second and more difficult problem of comprehending its æsthetic peculiarities in detail. Among the treasures of the Berlin *Museum für Völkerkunde* are two wooden doors which a Haussa negro has ornamented with sculptures. It can not be doubted that these remarkable reliefs, which represent scenes in the life of the Soudan, were intended for decoration. But what special kind of æsthetic feeling did the sculptor seek to express in his figures? The coarse forms and the distorted faces seem to permit but one answer: the Haussa artist intended the effort to be comical. In fact, the

majority of Europeans would form a judgment of this kind, not of those doors only, but of most of the works of negro sculpture. The basis for such a judgment is, however, very much like that on which the child innocently concludes that the bumblebee is angry because it buzzes. The negro's clumsy figure has indeed an effect of the comic upon us; but is that any evidence that it has or would be likely to have a similar effect on the artist's fellows in culture? We laugh at the grotesque figure which a five-year-old European child has drawn on its slate; but the little artist is deeply hurt by our merriment, because in his eyes the picture is not a comical caricature at all, but a serious representation of an imposing soldier. We apprehend that the sculptor in Haussaland would experience a similar feeling if he could witness the effect of his work in Berlin. We can, however, assert, without a trial of that kind, that the impressions which such sculptures make on the negro and on the European are very different—as different as the negro and the European are themselves. Not only because the negro regards them with different eyes, but chiefly because he carves them under the influence of different ideas. Each work of art is in itself only a fragment. The artist's presentation needs for its completeness to be complemented by the beholder's conception of it; and in that way only can the whole which the artist intended to create be called into existence. At all events, the effect of a work of art is essentially different upon a person who is able to interpret the significance of it and upon another who receives the impression only of what is shown. Suppose, for instance, a cultivated native Japanese, unacquainted with European art, to be looking

at Rembrandt's hundred-guilder picture.* He sees in the middle ground of a dusky vault a man in a long robe, around whose pleasant face hovers a peculiar glow which reminds him perhaps of the divine radiance of his native Buddha pictures; in front of him a woman carrying an infant in her arms; to the right, in the shadow, groups of poor and sick who, sad and sorrowful, gaze upon that man; to the left, in the light, a number of richly dressed men with indifference or scorn expressed in their faces and bearing; all this masterfully drawn and grouped in a marvellous richness of lights and shades. Our Japanese—a countryman of Korin and Hokusai—knows how to appreciate such things. He feels an æsthetic pleasure at what he sees, in addition to which he probably has a more or less definite impression that the scene has a deeper meaning. But his appreciation, which is limited to what is immediately visible, can go no further, and he therefore never reaches the experience of the deep emotion that a European feels before Rembrandt's canvas; for *he* knows that it is Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the weary and heavy-laden, to whom the poor and miserable flock and whom the rich and powerful avoid, who is there healing a sick child. Why does not the Japanese reach a full appreciation of our art? For the same reason that excludes a European from the complete enjoyment of Japanese art. A foreigner sees in a foreign work of art only what is visible to the eye; under the best conditions he enjoys the same immediate impression as the artist's equal in culture receives; but he does not gain all that is conveyed to the

* Christ Healing the Sick.

latter by means of this impression. Here is the real origin of the false supposition that with all its outer grace Japanese art is deficient in deeper meaning. The deeper feeling is there, and if a European art critic who knows nearly as much about Japanese culture as about European art can nevertheless not find it, is it therefore necessarily the Japanese art that is superficial?

What is true of the highly developed art of the Europeans and the Eastern Asiatics is also true of the primitive art of the Australians, the Bushmen, and the Eskimo. There is, at least, no reason for supposing that it should not be true of it. Who can tell what an Australian sees in the pictures which Grey discovered in the cave at Glenelg? We see nothing in them but somewhat rude representations of men and kangaroos. But what would the West Australian see in Raphael's Sistine Madonna? It may always be conceived that those figures express to the culture fellows of the primitive artist a meaning which to them has like significance with the supernatural mystery which beams upon us from the great eyes of the Christ child. As we have said, we do not know what this meaning is; we do not even know whether the pictures have a meaning. Can we then say, under such conditions, that we are acquainted with the art of Australians?

We have so far taken our examples from representative art. But poetry is not less fragmentary than painting and sculpture; and nowhere is it more fragmentary than among the primitive peoples. "In all their verse and songs," says Man of the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands, "a considerable part is left to the imagination of the hearer"; and in proof of this he cites the following characteristic specimen:

Bring the canoe to the shore,
I would see thy noble, valiant son—
Thy valiant son, who throws the young men,
Thy noble son, valiant son:
My axe is rusty, I would dye my lips with his blood.

This song is almost wholly incomprehensible to a European, and is therefore of no import to him; but it undoubtedly makes a very strong impression on the Mincopy, who is acquainted with the bloody tradition to which it relates.* Travellers who have collected the simple songs of the Australians are nearly always obliged to attach a very long commentary to the short text, without which the lines would be incomprehensible to a European reader. So, too, the Eskimo relate their tales and traditions in a very abbreviated form, as the story is supposed to be familiar.†

Under such circumstances it is certainly not easy to form an adequate conception of the significance which primitive art possesses to primitive peoples. There can, of course, be no doubt, so far as the principle is involved, concerning the way that will lead to a correct understanding of it. It is not hard to say that one can not understand the art of a people till he understands its whole culture; it is very hard to follow this good counsel, and it is all the harder the more remote the culture of the people in question is from our own. The problem would therefore be almost unsolvable as for the

* Compare E. H. Man on the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands. Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol. xii, pp. 168, 169, where the corresponding tradition is also given.

† Boas, The Central Eskimo. Annual Report of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, 1884–'85, p. 648. Compare also Rink, Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo, p. 65.

lowest peoples were it not made easier by the other fact that while primitive culture is the most remote from ours, it is also the simplest culture. The circle in which the life and thought of the lowest tribes move is extraordinarily narrow, and consequently we always succeed much better in comprehending a rude Australian than a civilized Chinese. However, even in the lowest depths of culture we only rarely find perfectly sure ground. The soil is yielding, and here and there yawning gaps open, which put a stop to investigation. The deductions and conclusions which we gather from various accounts are for the most part incomplete and untrustworthy, derived, as they usually are, from men who have not the most elementary previous sociological preparation. The science of art has taken no part in systematic investigations from the scientific point of view, which ethnology has recently entered upon. No historian of art or æsthetics has condescended to follow the example of Lane Fox and prepare a suitable set of instructions for travellers and expeditions.

In view of these facts, the doubt becomes more and more serious whether the science of art will ever be able to solve the problem presented in its inquiries into natural and cultural conditions of art among the primitive peoples. The question can be answered only by experiment, but not, certainly, by the first experiment which we here venture. It would be a great mistake to believe that such difficulties can be overcome by a first effort. We hope that the science of art of the future will replace many of our theories with better and more substantial ones. But even if our answers possess no lasting validity, our questions will have a value. This book will have fulfilled its purpose if it

satisfies those students of culture and art who are seeking light that information, which is worth their labour, can be found in those remote and neglected primitive regions. If our explanations provoke doubt and contradiction, so much the better for our science; for where doubt and contradiction are active, there the most essential conditions of progress are present.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRIMITIVE PEOPLES.

The beginnings of art lie, then, where the beginnings of culture lie. But the light of history illuminates only the last, shortest stretch of the long road that mankind has left behind it, and history can give no clew to those beginnings. Ethnology, on the other hand, is competent to show us primitive peoples in the light of the present. But, before giving ourselves up to its leading, we must make clear one term which pressingly requires a more exact definition than has been usually given to it. Every sociologist talks of primitive peoples, and nearly every one uses the word in a somewhat different sense. It is saying much, but not too much, to call the idea of primitive peoples one of the most varying and obscure ideas in the whole science of culture. Except the ancient civilized nations of Asia, there is hardly a people outside of Europe which has not at some time or other been declared to be a primitive people.* The corresponding term,

* In this insufficient definition of the fundamental idea lies perhaps the most dangerous weakness of the young science of sociology, and a justification, at the same time, of the distrust with which the representatives of the more mature branches of research are accustomed to regard its conclusions.

Naturvölker (peoples in a state of Nature), which prevails in ethnology, likewise leaves much to be desired. It is therefore unavailable for our special purpose, because it covers too much, even when its boundary lines are more exactly and distinctly drawn. Waitz's usage, for example, is to designate the civilly organized negroes of the Soudan and the straggling Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, as both people in a state of Nature. Ratzel tries to specialize the people of the first sort as half civilized; but the term *Naturvölker* is still with him wide enough to include a motley mixture of the most diverse forms of culture. The tribes of dwarfs that lead a rude hunter's life in the primitive forests of central Africa are in his view a *Naturvölk* equally with the firmly organized, agricultural, and cattle-raising Zulu nation, and he puts the garden-tilling, dexterous, and artistic Polynesians alongside of the miserable Australians. A cultural difference exists between a citizen of the Sandwich Islands and a native of the Australian continent, which is undoubtedly much greater than the interval that separates a refined Arab from an enlightened European. Yet Ratzel, who carefully separates the Arabs as a half-civilized people from the European civilized peoples, relegates the Polynesians to the company of the Australians. So summary a disposition may have some value as a provisional, very general orientation, but it is utterly reprehensible as a basis for sociological conclusions. The evil results of these superficial classifications are evident enough in many sociological fancies of the day, which have currency for a few years as laws of the history of civilization.

What are primitive peoples, or, in other words, what peoples possess the relatively lowest and most

nearly original form of culture? We confront the problem of arranging the various culture forms with which history and ethnology have made us acquainted into a series of gradations as more highly or more lowly developed. It is not superfluous to recollect that we are not dealing here with the physical but with the cultural peculiarities of the different human groups; for the problem has been often hopelessly confused by trying to solve it from the somatological standpoint. The construction of the cultural step-ladder of peoples is a problem of ethnology with which physical anthropology has nothing to do. Somatology could, at most, only furnish a physical gradation of the races.* But races and peoples are very different things. The characters which indicate that an individual belongs to a particular race decide nothing as to his appurtenancy or adaptation to a particular form of culture. We can account for racial characteristics as the effects of different forms of culture with far more right than we can accept the reverse view that the forms of culture are conditioned upon characteristics of race. Indeed, our researches concerning primitive art will furnish a new evidence that the influence of race character on the form of culture is very slight.

The question of the more or less *primitive character* of a people is of equal importance with that of a greater or less height of its civilization. Is there any means of defining the relative height of a form of culture with approximate accuracy? What we call culture is even

* This problem has not yet been solved, and, if we can trust the judgment of the highest anthropological authorities, is likely to be very difficult of solution in the future.

in its simplest form an infinitely complex whole, composed of numerous factors which for the most part, at least for the present, baffle exact definition. A comparison of the forms of culture in their aggregate would also hardly lead us to our end. On the other hand, the problem would evidently be easy of solution if we could discern a single cultural factor, which is, first, susceptible of an objective and exact definition, and, secondly, so significant that it can be regarded as a characteristic of an entire form of culture. There is, in fact, one factor of culture that fulfils both of these conditions—production. The form of domestic economy which rules or prevails in a social group, the manner in which the members of the group earn their living, is a fact which can be directly observed and can be determined everywhere, as to its leading features, with reasonable accuracy. We might be ever so uncertain about the religious and social views of the Australians, but not the slightest doubt is possible concerning the character of their productive industries. The Australians are hunters and gatherers of plants. It is perhaps impossible to inquire into the mental culture of the ancient Peruvians, but it is obvious to every eye that the citizens of the kingdom of the Incas were an agricultural people. But little would be gained for our purpose by the determination of the form of the productive industry of a people if it could not be shown at the same time that the form of their culture is dependent upon it. The idea of a graded classification of a people according to their domestic industries is anything but new. We find in the oldest writings on the science of culture the well-known groups of hunting peoples, and fishing peoples, of nomadic herdsmen, and of sedentary farm-

ers. But only a few historians of civilization appear to have grasped all the significance of the productive industry. It is certainly easier to underestimate it than to exaggerate it. Domestic industry is, as it were, the life centre of every form of culture; it influences all the other factors in the deepest and most irresistible way, while it is determined not so much by cultural as by natural factors, such as geographical and meteorological conditions. We might with some correctness call the form of production the primary culture manifestation, compared with which all other phenomena of culture appear derivative and secondary; not, indeed, in the sense that these other branches have grown out from the stem of production, but because, although of independent origin, they have been formed and developed under the overwhelming pressure of the predominant factor. Religious ideas have certainly not proceeded from economical conditions, yet the form of religious views which rules among a people may for the most part be traced back to the prevailing industry. The Kaffir belief in spirits has grown from an independent root; but the peculiar form of it, the belief in a hierarchal order of ancestral spirits, is evidently only the reflection of the hierarchal order of the living, which is again a resultant of the prevailing occupation of cattle-raising, with its warlike and centralizing tendencies.

Among the hunting peoples, in whose unsettled life no fixed social organization can be built up, we find—significantly—the belief in spirits, but not the conception of orders of souls. Nowhere, however, does the cultural significance of production stand in so strong a light as in the history of the family. The strange forms of human families, which sociology has invested with still

stranger hypotheses, appear remarkably reasonable as soon as they are considered in connection with the forms of production. Man in his lowest stage maintains himself by hunting, in the widest sense, and by gathering plant products. Together with this most primitive form of production appears the most primitive form of the division of labour—the division between the sexes based on physiological principles. While the man assumes the responsibility for the animal food, the collection of roots and fruits is made the duty of the woman. Under these circumstances the economical centre of gravity is nearly always on the man's side, and consequently the primitive form of the family bears an unmistakably patriarchal character. Of whatever character his views of blood relationship may be, the primitive man, even if he is not regarded as the blood relative of his posterity, stands in fact as lord and proprietor in the midst of his wives and children.* From this lowest stage production can advance in two directions: the further development may be made on the side of the feminine or of the masculine industries. But which of the two branches shall become the main stem depends, first, on the natural conditions under which the primitive group lives. If the flora and climate of the country favour and make profitable the saving and care of useful plants, the feminine industries are devel-

* It has often been accepted without further question that the theoretical views concerning blood relationship corresponded with the actual form of the family; but the study of Australian civilization has already sufficed to show us that that view is destitute of foundation. The Arabians, who have carried the patriarchal form of family to its extreme consequences, have, nevertheless, the conception that "the womb colours the child."

oped, and the collection of plant products gradually gives way to the cultivation of plants. This occupation is, in fact, always among primitive agricultural peoples in the hands of the women, and the economical centre of gravity is thereby borne upon the side of the women. Consequently, we find a matriarchal form of the family, or traces of one, in all primitive societies that maintain themselves chiefly by agriculture. The woman, as chief supporter and as mistress of the soil, has her place as the centre of the family. The establishment of a matriarchate, in the proper sense of a real supremacy of woman, has, however, only rarely been accomplished—only, that is, where the social group were removed from the attacks of enemies from without. In all other instances man has recovered as protector the predominance which he had lost as supporter. Thus have arisen the forms of the family which prevail among most of these agricultural peoples, and which represent a compromise between the matriarchal and the patriarchal systems. A larger part of mankind has, however, passed through a quite different development. Those hunting tribes which live in regions where agriculture is precarious, while they furnish man with animals that can be domesticated with profit, have not, like the former people, advanced to the cultivation of plants, but to cattle-raising. This pursuit, which has gradually developed out of hunting, seems to have been everywhere, just like that, formerly the prerogative of the man. The already existing economical predominance of the masculine side was thus re-enforced, and this relation finds a consequent expression in the fact that all the peoples who maintain themselves by stock-raising live under the patriarchal form of family. The

controlling position of the man in pastoral communities is further advanced by another circumstance which is likewise connected with the form of their production. Stock-raising peoples continually tend to military development, and consequently to the form of a centralized military organization. The inevitable result is that extreme form of the patriarchate in which the woman is a slave without rights under a marital lord clothed with despotic power. These two chief lines of development—the matriarchal and the patriarchal—do not, however, run their parallel courses without mutual disturbances. The aggressive, warlike character of the pastoral tribes constantly incites them to attacks on the more peaceful agriculturists, and the superior military capacity and organization of the pastoral peoples always assure them ultimate victory. Life is left to the conquered agriculturist, but his property is taken away from him. He tills the soil no longer for his own profit, but in the service of the foreigner, who occupies the conquered country as its lord. All the great civilized states have arisen, as is demonstrable, from such forcible unions of agricultural and pastoral groups. The form of their families bears plain evidence of the fact. The victors in the course of time, by the pressure of force and custom, impose the patriarchal system upon the matriarchal vanquished, and thus we find all civilized nations at the present time more or less sharply marked with the patriarchal family type.* Now, this decisive influence which production exercises on the

* A clear elaboration and confirmation of this sketch of the history of the development of the family will be given shortly in a separate work. We can here, of course, only present the outlines of it.

shaping of religion and of the family applies, together with all other branches of the life of culture, also to art. This assertion must for the present rest only on the analogies we have already cited; but the researches that follow will furnish direct proof of it, in that they will show that the same primitive form of art corresponds to the same primitive form of production in all the various zones and races.

Primitive peoples are thus those tribes which have a primitive form of getting a living. The most primary forms of production are the chase and plant-gathering. All the higher peoples have used these forms at some time, and a considerable number of more or less populous social groups have not yet elevated themselves above them. These last are those to which we must turn in order to become acquainted with the most primitive forms of art which are accessible to investigation.

We have, however, first to remove one objection from our way. While the civilization of the hunting tribes is a low one, is it therefore necessarily an original, primitive civilization? These tribes are possibly not primarily rude but they may have become rude; perhaps they have not remained at a lower stage, but have sunk to it from a higher; perhaps their civilization is not a physiological but a pathological manifestation—a phenomenon of degeneration—from which no conclusion can be drawn concerning the normal development of civilization. This view, which has long been expressed and has not yet been refuted, may proceed from one of two theories between which a decision must be made. In one case it results as the consequence of the dogma that the human race did not

begin its development at so low a stage, but that all men were endowed from the beginning by a divine influence with certain means of civilization which some peoples richly improved, while others have lost them in consequence of their sinful conduct. This view, it will be seen, does not rest on any scientific basis, and can not therefore be contradicted through scientific considerations. Since it is presented as a part or a consequence of a religious faith which invokes supernatural authority, science, which deals only with data perceptible to the senses, has nothing to do but to ignore it.* Still, the objection is not put forward in all cases on religiously dogmatic grounds. We may be perfectly satisfied that the culture of any people began with hunting and plant-gathering, and say at the same time that the present hunting peoples are in whole or in part not primitive peoples, but the degenerate posterity of social groups which had climbed to a higher stage in earlier ages. It can not be denied that such a thing is possible, but the question is whether it can be shown that it has anywhere happened. We know at least that evidence of the conditions supposed has never been brought forward in the case of any actual hunting tribe, though such evidence has been sought often enough. Martius was of the opinion that the wild Indians of Brazil "were once in a quite different state, and that in the course of dark centuries various calamities

* Schneider, for example, author of the otherwise eminently useful book, Die Naturvölker, rests on these grounds. With a frankness that deserves recognition, he declares this view in his preface: *philosophia quærit, religio possedet veritatem.* This is nobly said, and as long as he stands on this ground firmly he is in fact unassailable.

overtook them which have reduced them to their present condition of very peculiar decay and degeneracy. The Americans," he says, "are not a savage race, but one that has sunk to a savage condition."* The arguments, however, which he adduces in support of his assertion will to-day hardly convince an impartial sociologist. Gerland believes that "the condition of Australian sculpture points to an earlier higher stage"; but although he studied Australian civilization with his customary thoroughness, he could base his view only on an "impression" which is not shared by most other students.† While on the one hand decisive evidence of the hypothesis of degeneration is sought in vain, on the other hand a multitude of facts are found that speak plainly against it. Ethnology has shown that the cultural attainments of the lower peoples, to whatever race they may belong, exhibit a striking uniformity even to details, while such an agreement is not evident in a like degree among peoples of the higher stages. These circumstances are easily and naturally accounted for from our point of view. The scanty stock of culture that can be gained by a hunting people necessarily exhibits similar points everywhere because it is everywhere the result of the same simple and uniform conditions. From the point of view of the hypothesis of degeneration, on the contrary, this uniformity is an unsolvable puzzle. For if such peoples had sunk from higher grades of civilization, how can we account for their having been impoverished all in the same manner,

* Martius, Beiträge zur Ethnographie und Sprachenkunde Amerikas, vol. i, p. 6.

† Waitz-Gerland, Anthropologie der Naturvölker, vol. vi, p. 796.

for their having always saved precisely the same fragments from the former diversified elements of their culture? There is no reason to prevent us from regarding the hunting and plant-gathering tribes with which ethnology makes us acquainted as the bearers of a primitive culture and with it also of a primitive art. We, of course, use the word "primitive" here not in the absolute but in the relative sense. Even the hunting peoples no longer remain at the first beginning, if we can speak here of a first beginning, but they have already passed through a perhaps very long development. When we nevertheless designate them as primitive peoples, we mean nothing else than that their form of civilization represents the most primitive form as compared to all others that are within our reach to investigate, that they stand nearer to the original condition than any other. The following studies will be limited, as we have said, strictly to the hunting peoples proper, and the products of the art of the more highly civilized groups will be brought into view only for comparison. In this respect this work is distinguished from the majority of sociological writings which regard hunters and agriculturists as of about equal value for the study of primitive conditions. The distinction is essential. One standing at our point of view would find it impossible to approve those prevailing methods, but would rather be convinced that no clear knowledge can be gained from so turbid a mixture of materials.*

* Lubbock, in his well-known book Prehistoric Times, represents as savages, for example, Hottentots, Veddahs, Andaman Islanders, Australians, Tasmanians, Fiji islanders, Maoris, Tahitians, Tongans, North American Indians, Paraguay Indians, Patagonians, and Fuegians. The study of the family has suffered exceedingly from

Tribes which support themselves by hunting and by gathering plants are still found in all parts of the world except Europe. It is true that they appear, as they did in fact before the time of the European colonies, in a decided minority as compared with the more advanced groups, a fact which hardly needs a special explanation. The African continent accommodates in its immense extent, aside from the dwarf tribes of the centre, of whose civilization we know almost nothing, only a single hunting people, the Bushmen, who lead an unsettled life in the Kalahari Desert and the adjacent regions.

In America exclusively hunting tribes are found only in the extreme north and the extreme south—the Eskimo, with the Aleuts, and the Fuegians. All the rest practise more or less agriculture. Only individual Brazilian tribes, like the notorious Botocudo, live still in a very primitive condition. In Asia the primitive form of culture is represented in its purity only by the Mincopies of the Andaman group; the Veddahs of Ceylon have been too much exposed to Singhalese influences, and the reindeer-keeping Tschuktschis and their kindred in the north of Siberia have already advanced to cattle-raising. Only one continent is still inhabited, outside of the European settlements, wholly by primitive tribes: Australia stands out into our age

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such confusion. To say nothing of earlier works, Dr. Westermark, author of the latest work on the history of the family, The History of Human Marriage, London, 1891, cites the conditions among the Botocudo, the Queenslanders, the people of New Britain, the Tongans, the Samoans, and the Tuaregs in one series, to show that it was the husband's duty in the beginning to support the family, p. 15 *et seq.*

in an ethnological respect like the remnant of a long-sunken world. Here in deep seclusion a form of civilization has kept itself alive over a broad area, which has in most other regions been sunk for innumerable centuries in the darkness of oblivion. We find, therefore, in Australia the richest and most valuable material for the study of the beginnings of culture.

The culture of all these peoples has, as we have said, an extraordinary uniformity. As hunters they are all forced to lead an unsettled life. Consequently their industrial art presents only a very insignificant and one-sided development. A proper architecture, for instance, can be predicated among them only of the Eskimo, for whom solid dwellings are one of the first conditions of existence; and only among the Mincopics is there a rude beginning of a ceramics. Weapons alone, responding to the most pressing necessities of their life, have reached a very high and most ingenious degree of perfection, in illustration of which we need only to point to the harpoon of the Eskimo, the boomerang of the Australians, and the poisoned arrow of the Bushmen. In these respects the hunting peoples are incontestably superior to rude agriculturists and herdsmen. We find among them nothing in the way of religious ideas except an essentially rude belief in spirits and demons, which has never been elevated to a fixed orderly form of worship. Their family relations have already been briefly characterized. Hardly a trace of a social organization can be remarked among them. As a rule, all the men are a horde of equals, one to the other; if they recognise a temporary chief, his power is neither firmly founded nor definitely limited. Lastly, their political conditions are only slightly developed:

a hunting population has never become a hunting nation—that is, has never consolidated itself into a larger political unity. The small tribes live rather in a state of constant war. We should therefore, in the strict sense, never have the right to speak of hunting peoples. There are only hunting tribes.

CHAPTER IV.

ART.

If a traveller, about to explore a strange country, has not at least a general idea of the situation of his objective point and the direction of his route, he will be very liable to go wrong from the beginning. So we, before we enter upon our study, need a preliminary general orientation as to the nature of the phenomena to which we are to direct our attention. What is art? A suitable and exhaustive answer to this question must be left to the end of the researches which we have not yet begun. The characterization which we attempt here at the beginning is to serve, as we have said, only for a preliminary orientation; and it is possible that we shall be compelled, at the end, to modify it materially.

We inquire into the nature of art. A fundamental study should begin with an inquiry into the nature of the arts. It is certainly the task of science to discern the general in the special; but to discern the general in the special is not to overlook the special in the general. If the æsthetic criticism of an age is the expression of its æsthetic theories, then one of the most peculiar features of modern æsthetics consists in its having disregarded that distinction. The criticism of the eight-

eenth century was concerned with comprehending the peculiar qualities of single arts and measuring the work of each by its own standard. To the criticism of the nineteenth century such limitation of single arts appears from its higher point of view so vain that it rather demands from each art what only another has the means to furnish. A poem to-day must, before all things, have the effect of a picture, while we ask of a picture that it be poetical or musical. In a word, the arts now enjoy about the same equality in the view of criticism as citizens of the state have before the penal laws. With all proper admiration for this liberal gain, we can not avoid a doubt whether such progress would have been possible if the peculiar qualities of single arts had been longer dwelt upon.

If we nevertheless begin our detailed researches according to the approved methods of the older æsthetics, with a general definition of art, we shall still be no nearer reaching a fundamental principle than was the older æsthetics in its definitions. Our definition is nothing more than a scaffold, which can be pulled down after the building. By an æsthetic or artistic activity we mean one which in its course or in its direct result possesses an immediate emotional factor—in art it is usually a pleasurable one. Æsthetic activity is therefore not entered upon as a means toward an end outside of itself, but as in itself the end. In this respect it presents itself to us as the exact opposite of practical activity, which always serves as a means. The Athenian *epheboi*, who attacked the Persians on the field of Marathon, were engaged in practical activity; but when they afterward swung themselves in a weapon dance in celebration of the victory, they exerted themselves in æs-

thetic activity. Between practical and æsthetic activity is the transitional form of play. It is distinguished from art by its always seeking, like practical activity, an external object; and from practical activity in that the pleasurable factor, as in art, does not lie in the rather insignificant outer object, but in the activity itself. We can get a view of the relation of practical activity, play, and art by the simple device of representing practical activity by a straight line, play by a winding line, and art by a circle. The direct return in pleasure which characterizes artistic activity is realized, as we have said, either through the whole course or in the result of the activity. An Australian *corroborry* is an example of the former case, in which the dancers experience an immediate pleasure in their rhythmical motions; an example of the second case is the painting of the body previous to the festival, the æsthetic effect of which is not in the act itself, but in its final result.

In both cases—at least under normal conditions—the æsthetic enjoyment is not limited to those who engage in the æsthetic activity, but shared with those who look on or listen. This effect of art on the hearers and spectators is in no way occasional and unessential; it is contemplated by the artist. The artist works not only for himself, but also for others; and although he can not say that æsthetic creation proceeds alone from the purpose of affecting others, it is nevertheless essentially determined as to its form and direction with reference to the public—not, indeed, so much to the public as it is, but to the public as conceived by the artist. In any case a work of art presupposes a public as well as an artist. Mill falls into a great mistake when he believes he has found the characteristic peculiarity of poetry to

be that the poet never thinks of a listener.* Quite the contrary, the poet would never poetize if there were no hearers. An individual art in the strictest sense of the word is, even if it were conceivable, nowhere demonstrable.† Art appears among all peoples and in all periods as a social manifestation, and we renounce at once the comprehension of its nature and its significance if we regard it simply as an individual phenomenon. In the following studies we shall, as we have said, regard exclusively the social sides and relations of artistic production. We shall consider the art of primitive peoples as a social phenomenon and a social function. This view can make no claim to originality, but is rather the oldest and, except in recent times, the commonest conception of art. No other conception was known in antiquity; at least the ancient writers always treated art as a public affair. Only to modern individualism did this view appear no longer the only possible and just one.

We have, further, only to determine in what order we shall investigate the different arts. The question is

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* "All poetry is of the nature of soliloquy. The peculiarity of poetry appears to us to lie in the poet's utter unconsciousness of a listener." Thoughts on Poetry and its Various Dissertations and Discussions, vol. i, p. 71.

† The artistic productions of prisoners in solitude, which are regarded as intended for the artist alone, might be cited in opposition to this. Yet the argument proves nothing. In the first place, the prisoner is isolated in his cell under very abnormal circumstances, which allow no conclusions as to his normal conditions. In the second place, he has not always been in these conditions. The inclination toward artistic expression which he indulges in his isolation has been like his whole individuality, shaped by the social environment from which he came and in which he formerly lived.

of a purely practical nature. It will therefore be best to utilize for our purpose the best known and most favourite classification of arts, without on that account supposing any deeper significance in it.

The arts are usually divided into two great groups —the arts of rest and motion. The distinction is sharply and clearly defined by Fechner: "That the arts of the former kind strive to please through resting, those of the other kind through moving or transient forms; the former, therefore, so transform or combine masses at rest, the latter produce such bodily motions or temporal changes that the artist's object is accomplished." * We begin with the arts of rest, which are commonly designated the plastic and graphic arts. The most original form of representative art is probably not independent sculpture but decoration, and the object to which decoration was earliest applied is the human body. We therefore study first primitive bodily adornment. Even the rudest tribes are, however, not satisfied with decorating their bodies, but also decorate their implements and weapons. We shall study, secondly, this decoration of implements. In the third place, and finally, we shall contemplate the primitive works of free painting and sculpture, or those paintings and sculptures which did not serve purposes of ornamentation as productions of decorative art, but have an independent significance. The dance, which may be conceived as a living sculpture, forms the transition from the arts of rest to the arts of motion. We shall devote special attention to this art; for the study of the dance, which has an essentially different and higher

* Fechner, Vorschule der Aesthetik, vol. ii, p. 5.

significance among primitive tribes than among civilized peoples, is adapted more than any other to deepen the knowledge of the social importance of art. In the lower stages of civilization the dance is always associated with song; and in this way we are led over to poetry, with the most original forms of which we shall become acquainted and appraise in at least their most essential traits. Finally, we shall apply ourselves to primitive music. With this our study will be completed, and we shall have further only to collate its general results.

CHAPTER V.

PERSONAL DECORATION.

When Darwin gave a piece of red cloth to a native Fuegian he was astonished to see that it was not used for clothing, but was torn into small bits, which the receiver and his companions bound round their freezing limbs as ornaments. This observation does not characterize the Fuegians alone. Darwin might have made it as well in the Kalahari Desert and in the Australian bush as at Cape Horn. With the exception of the arctic tribes who could not live at all without complete clothing, all hunting peoples are much more richly and carefully decorated than clothed. What Cook once said of the Fuegians may be said with no less truth also of the Australians, the Mincopies, Bushmen, and the Botocudo: "They are content to be naked, but ambitious to be fine." Those writers on the history of culture who devote themselves to the pleasant task of demonstrating in a popular scientific way to cultivated people of all conditions how magnificent our achievements have been, are wont to regard this disproportion of clothing and ornament as a pleasing example of the childish simplicity of savages, which can not distinguish the superfluous from the necessary. This demonstration has, in fact, only the one fault of proving a little too

much. If savages are really the great imbecile children they are represented to us to be, it is somewhat hard to comprehend how they can still continue to exist, for by rights they should long ago have perished, to be warning examples against their irrationality to all more highly gifted beings. Creatures who are not qualified to know their own wants can certainly not live more than a little time. But primitive peoples, with all their lack of clothing and excess of decoration, have already maintained themselves on the earth for a whole series of millenniums, although the higher peoples have solicitously tried to make it not too easy for them. Either the primitive peoples have no right to existence, or have the historians of culture not been able in this case to distinguish the superfluous from the necessary? Possibly the decoration of the primitive peoples is not so superfluous as it seems to be to the practical sense of the nineteenth century. Perhaps it is, to the "savage" at least, as necessary and indispensable as clothing is to us.

But before we can inquire into the significance of primitive ornament we must become acquainted with it. It is partly fixed, partly movable. Under fixed decoration we include all permanent cosmetic modifications of the body, such as scarification, tattooing, and boring of the septum, the lips, and the ears. Movable ornament, on the other hand, is only loosely and temporarily connected with the body. It includes the numerous forms of tassels, bands, girdles, rings, and pendants, which form the costliest possessions of primitive peoples. We shall, however, especially and first consider the simplest form of movable decoration—painting; for, in the first place, painting, in our opinion,

most eminently represents the original form of decoration, and, in the second place, it apparently stands in causal connection with some kinds of fixed decoration.

The custom of painting the body prevails quite generally in the lowest grade of culture. Only the Eskimo who have to keep their bodies (at least out of doors) completely covered, do not practise it.

The Australian always carries in his travelling sack of Kangaroo hide, a provision of white earth and red and yellow ochre. In his everyday life he is satisfied with a few spots on his cheeks, shoulders, or breast, but on festive occasions he extends the painting over his whole body.* There is no important event in Australian life which is not marked by some special painting of the body. The young Australian receives his first red or white painting on the festival of the initiation of youth, by which he is received into the community of the men of his tribe.† The adults who take part in the ceremony likewise cover their dusky skins with various white and red designs. When the men go out to battle "they paint themselves with various colours. These colours are probably not selected by every individual brave at his own pleasure, but are appointed for the occasion according to well-understood rules. But the arrangement, the lines, and figures are left to each one's fancy." ‡ In the battle which Hodgkinson witnessed on the Macleay River one party had painted themselves with red stripes.# Red is, in fact,

* Brough Smyth, The Aborigines of Victoria, vol. i, p. 275.

† Angas, South Australia Illustrated, No. 22. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 58 *et seq.*

‡ Brough Smyth, The Aborigines of Victoria, vol. i, p. 165.

Hodgkinson, Australia from Port Macquarie to Moreton Bay.

the war colour of most of the tribes, but in the north and west the braves use white. * The Australian, however, paints himself most richly and most carefully for his dance festivals. "For the festival," says Lumholtz of the natives of Queensland, "they smear themselves partly or wholly with red or yellow earth; frequently they also paint the whole body with a mixture of powdered charcoal and fat, as if they were not already black enough." † As a rule, however, the colours are drawn in patterns. "The orbits of the eyes of the dancers," says Thomas, in an account of a great *corroborry* in Victoria, "are surrounded with white rings, white streaks are drawn along the nose, and light parallel stripes on the forehead. The lines on the body are fantastic, but always arranged after a certain plan." ‡ While the dancers nearly always appear in white paint in the *corroborry* through all Australia, various colours are used for other dances. "In the *palti* dance they paint themselves with red as well as white, and in the *pideku*, natives of Moorunde decorate themselves with stripes of red ochre. In the canoe dance the bodies are painted with white clay and red ochre." # As red painting in Australia marks the entrance into life, so it denotes, too, the exit from life. The Narrinyeri adorn the bodies of the dead with bright-red ochre, ‖ and this custom is quite widespread, for H. E. Meyer observed it also among the tribes on Encounter Bay. In the north the bones, at least, of the putrefied corpse are

* Waitz-Gerland. Anthropologie der Naturvölker, vol. vi, p. 739.
† Lumholtz, Unter Menschenfressern, p. 153.
‡ Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 167.
# Ibid., vol. i, p. 153.
‖ Taplin, The Narrinyeri.

painted, after which they are carried for a long time as a memorial.* Finally, the system of painting as mourning prevails over the whole continent. Australian and European mourning colours are as different as their skin colours. The white European mourns in black clothes, the black Australian mourns in white earth. In certain tribes the women, besides covering their heads with a cap of white earth, besmear their whole bodies, while the men colour only their faces or their backs.† The prevalent colour of mourning is, as we have said, white, but here and there other colours are used besides. On King George's Sound, for example, the survivors put black and white spots upon their foreheads, on the temples, and down to the cheek bones, and among the Dyeri the mourners bespeckle their whole bodies with white and red spots. It has been proved, in individual cases at least, that the different colours are not applied in a wholly arbitrary way. According to the statements of Schuermann, in many districts white is used only on the death of a blood relative, while black expresses mourning for a relative by marriage.

The body painting of the extinct Tasmanians was not different in any essential point from that of the Australians. This correspondence between two neighbouring peoples, related by race and culture, is not wonderful; but it is very striking that we also find the same characteristic features of body painting among the far-distant Andamanese. Moreover, this analogy between the Mincopies and the Australians is, as we shall

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 808.

† Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 118.

see, only the first of a long series. Care must indeed be taken to guard against the besetting sin of ethnologists of attaching fine-spun hypotheses concerning the primitive connection or relationship of now separated peoples to single parallels of this kind. The resemblance between the Australian and Andamanese cultures are, nevertheless, so numerous, and extend to so many and so minute details, that it will not be easy for us to believe in a wholly independent parallel development of the two peoples. "The Mincopies use three colouring substances for their body painting; and by the way they apply them they let it be known whether a person is ill or in mourning, or going to a festival." * Contrary to the custom of the Australians, where the body painting of the women is far behind that of the men, no distinction is made here between the sexes. The only limitation is applied to the unmarried, who are forbidden to paint their necks. The first of the three colouring materials of the Andamanese is a pale, olive-coloured earth, which, mixed with water, is spread thickly over the whole body, to signify mourning for a deceased person. The peculiar clay mourning cap is also worn by the Andamanese as in Australia. This earthen crust further occasionally serves a practical purpose: it is customary, for example, to put it on when one is excessively heated by hunting or dancing. The second pigment, a pure white earth, is, on the other hand, used only for embellishment. The women paint themselves, and the men especially, with this colour for the festivals, drawing with the forefinger nail neat

* E. H. Man, On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands. Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol. xii, p. 333.

rectilinear patterns on the cheeks, the body, and the limbs. The third material, a mixture of burned yellow ochre and fat, is likewise used principally for cosmetic purposes. It is sometimes applied besides as a curative, "but never, as has often been said, to protect the skin against insects." As a decorative colour yellow ochre is always laid on in patterns, which, however, answering to the nature of the pigment, do not go beyond rude streaks and zigzag lines. As in Australia, so here likewise, the dead are adorned with the colours which they loved in life; corpses are painted with yellow ochre.*

The painting of the Bushmen is very uniform. They rub their faces and hair with red ochre.

A great diversity of colours and patterns is found again among the Fuegians. Red is here, too, the favourite colour; but besides it we find black, and, more rarely, white. "The region around the eyes," says Cook, "was commonly white, and the rest of the face was adorned with perpendicular red and black streaks." In another place Cook speaks of two men "who had painted their whole bodies crosswise with black streaks." † Giacomo Beve has given a little more exact information concerning the most usual patterns: "Very frequently they draw parallel lines of different colours across the face, crooked lines on the cheeks and nose, and most curious figures on the breast and arms." ‡

The body-painting of the Botocudo is poorer in

* Man, Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol. xii, pp. 333, 334.

† Cook, from Banks's Daybook. Joest, Körperbemalen, Narbenzeichnen, und Tattauiren, p. 13.

‡ Globus, vol. xliii, p. 157.

colours than that of the Fuegians. They have no white, but make all the more effective use of the other two colours, a yellowish red of vegetable origin and a deep blue-black. "With the red," says the Prince von Wied, "which is easily washed off from the skin, they paint especially the face from the mouth upward, by which they are given an extremely wild, fiery aspect. They usually paint the whole body black, excepting only the face, the forearms, and the feet and ankles from the calves down, while the painted part of the legs is marked off from the unpainted part by a red stripe. Others divide the body lengthwise, leaving one half in the natural condition and painting the other half black; still others paint only the face a bright red. I have found only these three kinds of colouring among them. With the body painted black, they are accustomed to adorn themselves further with a black streak which is drawn like a mustache from one ear to the other across the red-coloured face and under the nose." * The prince, unfortunately, says nothing about the meaning of the different patterns.

It follows undoubtedly from our sketch that the primitive body painting served chiefly for æsthetic purposes; that it was a decoration, and not, as has sometimes been said, a kind of primitive clothing.† We are

* Wied, Reisen in Brasilien, vol. ii, p. 11.

† With certain higher tribes, painting certainly takes the place of protective clothing. The Hottentots, for example, rub themselves with ashes and fat for defence against the cold, and the Shillooks smear their black bodies with a reddish mixture of cow-dung and ashes for protection against mosquito bites. In all these cases the painting, in correspondence with its purpose, is as uninterrupted as possible over the whole body. The primitive peoples,

thus fully justified in regarding the painting of the body first from an æsthetic point of view.

The number of colours at the disposal of primitive cosmetics is not great. Not more than four can be used under the most favourable circumstances; and of these four, only one is of general occurrence—red.

Red—and particularly yellowish red—is the favourite colour of the primitive as it is the favourite colour of nearly all peoples. We need only observe our children to satisfy ourselves how little taste on this point has changed. In every box of water colours the saucer that contains the cinnabar red is the first one emptied; and, "if a child expresses a particular liking for a colour, it is nearly always a bright, dazzling red. Even adults, notwithstanding the modern impoverishment and blunting of the colour sense, still, as a rule, feel the charm of red." Goethe certainly expresses the general impression when, in his Farbenlehre, he praises the incomparable power of yellowish red over the emotions.* Red has then, at all time, played an important part in ornament, especially in masculine decoration. The custom of the triumphant general painting himself red disappeared, indeed, with the Roman Republic, but scarlet was a favourite colour for the masculine festal dress till within the last century,† and the European

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on the other hand, paint themselves with single lines and points which can not possibly serve for the protection of the skin.

* "Yellowish red: the active side is here in its highest energy, and it is no wonder that energetic, healthful, nude men especially, rejoice in this colour. The fondness of savage men for it has been remarked everywhere." Farbenlehre, p. 775.

† Compare especially the pictures of the Middle Ages, and the Renascence.

war dress still preserves clear red in a richer measure than is desirable in the presence of the improved long shooters. It may be questioned whether the strong effect of red is called out by the direct impression of the colour, or by certain associations. Many animals have a feeling for red similar to that of man. Every child knows that the sight of a red cloth drives oxen and turkeys into the most passionate excitement, and every zoölogist has observed how strikingly often the secondary sexual marks are coloured red, from the glowing red callosities of the buttocks of the ardent baboon and the scarlet crest of the cock to the yellowish-red comb which the male triton carries on his back during pairing time. These facts show undoubtedly that the æsthetic effect of red depends essentially on the immediate impression. It is, however, on the other hand, no less probable that the direct effect on men is strengthened by strong emotional associations. As to the primitive peoples, one circumstance is here significant above all others. Red is the colour of blood, and men see it, as a rule, precisely when their emotional excitement is greatest—in the heat of the chase and of the battle. In the second place, all the ideas that are associated with the use of the red colour come strongly into play—recollections of the excitement of the dance and the combat. Notwithstanding all these considerations, painting with red would hardly have been so generally diffused in the lowest stages of civilization if the red colouring material had not been everywhere so easily and so abundantly procurable. Probably the first red with which the primitive man painted himself was nothing else than the blood of the wild beast or of the enemy he had slain. At present most of the deco-

ration is done with a red ochre,* which is very abundant nearly everywhere, and is commonly obtained through exchange by those tribes in whose territory it is wanting. The Dyeri in Australia undertake expeditions of several weeks' duration to renew their supplies—an evidence of the esteem in which the red colour is held. All these facts taken together make the predominance of red in primitive body-painting fully comprehensible. Above all, the æsthetic value of red is actually so great and so obvious that there is no need of framing in addition a hypothesis of religious significance to explain its use.†

Yellow has a like æsthetic character, and enjoys therefore a similar cosmetic application. In the Andaman Islands it takes the exact place of red; the yellow painting of the Mincopies corresponds precisely with the red of the Australians.‡ The latter use yellow almost equally with red as a decorative colour. That it is more rarely seen in the south is accounted for not by its being in less esteem, but because of the less abun-

* The use of red ochre is indeed extremely ancient. The diluvial relics on the Schussenquelle include, for example, a ball of red chalk which was probably intended for painting the body. Nevertheless, painting with blood is still practised in some places, even in Australia. The tribes on Cooper's Creek paint themselves with blood which is taken from a bird or some other small animal. Howitt, in Brough Smyth, vol. ii, p. 302.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 738: "Red seems to be the most sacred colour with them (the Australians); in various places the dead are painted with it." The supposition seems more reasonable to us that corpses were painted red in Australia for the same reason that they are crowned with flowers in Europe—to decorate them.

‡ The yellow of the Andaman Islands is, furthermore, very close to the Australian yellowish or brownish red.

dance of yellow ochre, which through extensive districts is not found. The absence of yellow from the body-painting of the Bushmen, Fuegians, and Botocudo has, however, probably another cause. Of the Bushmen at least we know definitely that they are acquainted with a yellow ochre and use it in their wall paintings. That they nevertheless reject this pigment in their body-painting is evidently for the very valid reason that a yellow painting would hardly show on their yellow skins, and as the Botocudo and Fuegians, although they are called red-skins, are rather yellow-skins, it is reasonable to suppose that they refrain from a yellow painting for the same reason.

The influence which the colour of the skin exercises on the choice of the colour for painting stands out still more plainly when we come to white. White appears in the primitive body-painting at least as much as red, but only among the dark Australians and Mincopies. Among other fairer-coloured peoples it is either wholly absent or is given a prominence, as among the Fuegians, behind that of the other colours. While red and yellow are worn almost exclusively for decoration, white has besides another significance. We shall first consider it in its property as an ornamental colour. Both the Australians and the Mincopies paint their bodies for festivals with lines of white earth, and with good reason; for no other colour could bring out the designs so clearly and sharply and at the same time so strongly deepen by glaring contrast the black of their skins, of which the dark races are as proud as the fair ones of their white. In the latter respect the lines in white earth of the Australians and Mincopies represent the original form of the black beauty-patch which the ladies of the Rococo

period stuck upon their fair rouged cheeks. European observers, it is true, do not regard the white painting for the dance as exactly a pleasing docoration. Bulmer thinks that the Australian *corroborry* dancers "wished to make themselves as terrible as possible. They marked every rib with a stripe of white earth, and painted besides white streaks on their arms, legs, and faces in such a way that they looked in the flaring light of the camp fire like living skeletons." * It is highly questionable whether the gruesome impression of their skeleton figures, so often described, was contemplated by the dancers or was felt by the native spectators. Our European horror arises not so much from the impression of the skeleton in and of itself as from certain associations which we link with it. Most authors seem to regard it as self-evident that these associations are at least as inevitable and as suggestive to a nude Australian as to a civilized European; but it can not in reality be supposed that the skeleton has the same effect upon the former as the ghostlike apparition upon the latter.† We therefore, till the contrary is shown, give a somewhat more sober explanation of the preference. The Australian *corroborry* is always performed at night. The dancing place is regularly lighted by a fire and usually also by the moon, but the light is nevertheless so dim that the motions of the dark-hued dancers can not be perceived plainly without the help of these dazzling streaks, which are not at all intended to imitate

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* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 275.

† Ghosts swarm in the stories of the Australians, but we have never met in them any of the skeleton ghosts which play so prominent a part in our stories.

the bones of a skeleton, but simply serve to make the principal lines upon the body conspicuous. Both among the Australians and Mincopies white curiously appears also to be the mark of the exact opposite of festive joy. White mourning paint is, however, often distinguished without difficulty from white festal painting. In the Andaman Islands the latter is always traced in patterns, while the former covers the whole body evenly with a continuous coating. In Australia, too, where the dance painting is likewise always in patterns, the mourning colours are laid on without design among some tribes, while in other cases the mourners are painted with various figures which sometimes indicate the degrees of relationship between the mourner and the deceased.* Why have the Australians and Mincopies chosen white as the colour of mourning? When we consider painting in mourning, we receive a decided impression that

* "In order to express their grief," says Wilhelmi, of the Port Lincoln tribes, "the women paint their whole forehead, a ring around each eye, and a perpendicular streak over the stomach; the men paint their breasts with stripes and points, which proceed downward from the shoulders and join at the navel. The different patterns show the different degrees of relationship between the mourners and the dead." When a Dyeri in mourning was asked why he painted red and white spots upon himself, he answered, in order that touching the corpse might not make him ill (literally—"You see very good make-im like that; suppose me no make-im, me tumble down too; that one—viz., the corpse—growl along-a-me"). The custom prevails in the same tribe of eating the fat of the dead at the mourning feast. "Afterward the men paint a black ring around the mouth with charcoal and fat. This mark is called *munamurroomurroo*. The women do the same, and paint besides two white streaks on their arms, as a sign that they have partaken of the meal. The rest of the men smear themselves over and over again with white earth, in order to attest their grief." Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 120.

it is designed chiefly to make its wearer unrecognizable.* "This custom," says Joest, "may be traced back to the fear of meeting the wandering and lingering soul of the dead one. The people try, in order to avoid the persecutions of evil spirits, to make themselves unrecognizable to them by painting themselves with a colour to which they are not accustomed." Joest's explanation is indeed purely hypothetical, but it has nevertheless a degree of probability, and we may accept it until it is replaced by a better one.

Lumholtz states that the Queenslanders often paint themselves with a mixture of powdered charcoal and fat, and adds, "just as if they were not already black enough"! The blacks, indeed, do not consider themselves black enough, just as white ladies often think they are not white enough, and as these enhance their interesting paleness with powder and white chalk, so the blacks try to increase the attractions of their dark skin by means of charcoal dust and fat. It is occasionally admitted, even by Europeans, that this black decorative painting, which is very much in vogue among numerous tribes in Australia, has a not unpleasing effect. More than one traveller has extolled the deep, metallic tone which it lends to the skin of the natives. Black painting has, of course, a different meaning to the yellow Americans than to the dark Australians. Deep blue-black has the same value to them as white to the Australians. They prize it and use it as that colour in which the painted design is most sharply defined against their skin.

* For Andamanese painting in mourning we refer to the Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol. xii, pl. ix, Fig. 2; for Australian, among others, to Brough Smyth, vol. i, Fig. 2, where the white painting of the face strongly suggests a mask.

While we are relatively well informed about the colours of primitive body-painting, our knowledge of the patterns is very defective. An exhaustive presentation of these, such as we have to thank the Prince of Wied for as regards the Botocudo, is a rare exception. Most of those who speak of them think they have said enough when they observe that the patterns are "fantastic," or "strange," or "remarkable," and they can only rarely be defined more or less plainly and completely in the pictures and the photographs. Under these circumstances it would be presumption to express a definite opinion of their meaning.

Are the primitive painted designs individual inventions, or are they copied from some model? There are reasons that indicate that imitation plays an important part in body-painting. First, original designs are very rare in all primitive art; on the other hand, there prevails generally, in ornamentation as well as in painting and sculpture, imitation of motives which are presented to the primitive artist in his daily occupation. The study of the decoration of implements in particular teaches us that the designs with which the Australians adorn their robes, shields, and clubs, and which, too, seem generally similar to the patterns on their skin, are nothing else than conventionalized imitations of drawings of animals. The thought of disguising themselves as animals by a corresponding painting of their bodies is surely not too remote from the conception of the hunting tribes which worship in animals some of the protecting divinities of their kindred, and which generally take pleasure in mimetic representations of animals. Lastly, we have succeeded in discovering at least one case in which the body-painting undoubtedly

represents the drawing of an animal. Howitt mentions, in an account of the initiation of youth in Gippsland, "that the *bullerawreng*—that is, the godfathers—paint the faces of the *jerryale*—that is, the candidates—with pipeclay, so that they shall resemble nurt-ducks—namely, with a white ring around each eye and a white band across the cheek bones or the eyebrows." * We do not think, however, that all the painted patterns without exception are to be accounted for as imitations of this sort. Mourning paint, for instance, in most cases simply makes the wearer unrecognisable without any resemblance being attempted, and when the Botocudo brave colours half of his body blue-black he certainly imitates no natural figure thereby, but only proposes to produce fear in his enemies through the most unusual and strangest appearance possible.

Bodily decoration by painting is subject to a serious defect: it is very transitory. As a natural consequence, pains have been taken to impress the design on the body in some lasting way. Two means of accomplishing this have been found in the lowest stages of civilization which have spread over almost the whole earth—scarification and tattooing. The ethnical distribution of these processes depends, again, on the colour of the skin. The yellow Bushmen and the copper-coloured Eskimo practise tattooing; the dark Australians and the Mincopies limit themselves to scarification.

The nature of scarification is sufficiently indicated by its name. The skin and the flesh are cut in various places with a flint or a piece of mussel shell, or with some other primitive knife, so that the scarified

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 64.

wound shall afterward form a paler-coloured raised figure on the dark cuticle. Some Australian tribes try to enlarge the scar by filling the flesh wounds for a considerable time with earth,* while others in the north and northwest rub in the juice of a certain plant.† The scarification is extended by the different Australian tribes over different parts of the body. By some it is applied chiefly on the back, by others on the arms, the breast, the belly, and the legs. The scars are borne by both sexes, but the men are generally more fully scarified than the women. The designs consist of points and curved or straight lines, which are sometimes extended over the whole width of the chest.‡ In the vicinity of Torres Strait, the men bear a thick horse-shoe-shaped scar on each shoulder, which in the picture resembles a European epaulet. The operation of scarification forms a part of the ceremony that marks entrance into the age of manhood. But it is too painful and exhausting to be completed on this occasion. It is, therefore, taken up again afterward at different times; and the design does not appear in full except upon the older persons. "The lines," says Lumholtz of the Queenslanders, "always denote a certain order of rank, and here it depends upon age. Boys under a certain age are not decorated; but in time they receive a few cross-stripes upon their chests and stomachs. The

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 296.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 739.

‡ Good pictures of Australian scar decoration may be found—to mention only the most accessible works—in Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. ii, pp. 20, 36, 38, 39, 40: Wood, Natural History of Man, vol. ii; and in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 11, where the scars on the back of a native of Victoria are seen in monstrous development.

number of stripes is gradually increased, and when the subjects have grown up a half-moon-shaped line is cut around each nipple." * In the southeast different ages are known from the different stages of scarification, of which there are five for adults.†

The Tasmanians, too, seem to have all submitted to the painful operation. Cook speaks of dotted lines which they have on their breasts and arms, and Bonwick calls the single scars star-shaped. Cuts in the form of a semicircle were seen besides on the bellies of the women.‡

The custom of scarification prevails generally among the different tribes and with both sexes in the Andaman Islands. The operation is begun earlier here and completed earlier than in Australia. "Only a very few children are allowed to pass longer than their eighth year without scarification; and the marking is completed in their sixteenth or eighteenth year." No special festival is held, as in Australia. The execution of the work, except among the northern tribes, is committed to the women, who use a quartz flake in the process. The scars are made principally on the back and shoulders, on the nape of the neck, on the chest, groins, belly, and on the backs of the feet and hands. The lines on the back are, however, not cut by a woman but always by a male friend. The designs are very simple, consisting in all the tribes of short horizontal and vertical cuts, which form rows, and only the arrangement and number of these rows vary somewhat among the several tribes.#

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* Lumholtz, p. 177.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 740 (from Tiechelmann and Schürmann).

‡ Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 812.

Man, Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 333.

A European who sees an Australian or a Mincopy adorned with scars finds it hard at first to believe that scarification really is intended for decoration, for it appears far more repulsive than pleasing to him. It is therefore very easy to comprehend why it has been asserted that scarification has not so much a cosmetic as a secret religious significance. The view is supported principally by the authority of Gerland, who explains such scarification as well as tattooing as the mark, the symbol of property, of the divinity to whom the bearer has dedicated himself.*

It is not, of course, incumbent on us here to investigate the meaning of scarification and tattooing in general; we are concerned simply with the question whether scarification in the lowest grades of civilization —that is, in Australia and the Andaman Islands—has a religious or an æsthetic significance. Gerland finds an evidence in favour of his view in a tradition, according to which "a spirit taught men the art of scarification, and was then changed into a great kangaroo." † But in this tradition, concerning which we have no knowledge whether it has a great age or a wide diffusion, nothing is said, in the first place, of a god, but only of a spirit, or, in the second place, of the meaning of the scarification. If we must, from the circumstance that the introduction of an art is ascribed to a spirit, necessarily conclude that it originally had a religious significance, we might with far greater right than to scarification ascribe a religious meaning to the kindling of fire, as this art—and that, not only according to one, but ac-

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, pp. 37, 575.
† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 740.

cording to numerous Australian traditions—was taught to the natives by supernatural beings. There is also a myth concerning the origin of scarification among the Andamanese. "Maia Duku, who seems to be identical with Tomo, the mythical ancestor of the Mincopies, was the first one to mark himself with scars. One day while fishing he shot off an arrow; it missed its aim and struck a hard object, which was a piece of iron, the first one that was found. Duku made himself an arrow-head out of this piece, tattooed himself with it, and then sang the verse:

'Who can kill me now? I am tattooed, I am tattooed!'" *

It will be observed that the Andaman tradition gives even less evidence, if possible, in favour of Gerland's supposition than the Australian. In it the discoverer is neither a god nor a spirit, but the first Mincopy, and there is not the slightest hint in it that with the scarification he cut the mark of a divinity upon himself. His declaring the scar in his song a protecting power may most naturally be interpreted as meaning that a man who has tested his fortitude by going through the ordeal of scarification need no longer be afraid of an enemy. In fact, the Mincopies regard scarification as a means "of testing courage and endurance against bodily pain." † Gerland then relies on the high festivity with which the scarification is completed, but this festivity is not usual among the Andamanese, and in Australia it bears less a religious than a social character. So far as we really know of the initiation of youth, it does not denote the reception of the youth into union with any

* Man, Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 170.

† Ibid., vol. xii, p. 331.

divinity, but his reception into the society of grown men, and this fact gives us at once a fully satisfactory and natural explanation of his being subjected to scarification on this occasion. The operation fulfils a double purpose: it tests the manly endurance of the candidate, and it verifies his tribal relation by an indelible sign. Gerland himself does not deny that "the scars are often tribal and family marks," but he says that "it directly follows from that fact that they were originally religious tokens." * We must confess that we do not at all understand this conclusion. It is certainly possible that a tribe may have chosen some religious symbol for its distinctive mark, but that all tribes should have actually chosen thus has not been proved by Gerland or anybody. No more is the fact mentioned by Gerland that "Perron discovered on a Tasmanian grave marks which were very like the characters with which the natives tattooed their forearms," conclusive "testimony that in this case also tattooing was originally the painting of the representation of the guardian divinity." † This is indeed a peculiar proof; for, first, it is not clearly evident why a non-religious name mark or tribal mark should not be put on the grave of a deceased person; and, secondly, it is an entirely arbitrary assumption to suppose that the lines and points with which the Tasmanians scarified (not tattooed) themselves were representations of their guardian divinities. The evidences in favour of Gerland's assertion, so far as it relates to the lowest peoples, are thus , while on the other hand facts are not want peak unequivocally against it. Ger-

* Wai vol. vi, p. 740. † Ibid., vol. vi, p. 814.

land himself admits, as we have said, that the scars are "often tribal and family marks," and he can cite for this the testimony of the best experts and the most indefatigable observers of Australian life, who unanimously account for a part at least of the scars as tribal marks.* In single cases these tribal marks might have also a religious significance, although that has not been proved as yet in any instance. But even if Gerland had proved it for all, we should nevertheless have been justified in regarding the scarification of the Australians and Mincopies as in the first instance a decoration. Aside from the fact that a tribal mark or a religious symbol may be at the same time an ornament, the most various accounts assert undoubtedly and uniformly that while certain scars or groups of scars are tribal marks, by far the greatest number of the scars have a purely ornamental significance. How much this æsthetic meaning has dominated the other social one may be concluded from the fact that it has led more than one observer wholly to deny the other.† In most accounts, however, the relation of the tribal scars and the orna-

* "They decorated themselves with raised scars, according to a design which was common to all the members of the tribe. One certain form had always to be executed, although others were left to individual tastes." (Brough Smyth, vol. i, pl. xli.) Bulmer not only accounts for the scars as being most decidedly tribal marks, but also gives figures that distinguish individual tribes. The first sign has the form of a boomerang, and the others consist of series of points and stripes. The investigations of Wilhelmi, Lumholtz, and others may be compared.

† Curr, for example (Australia, vol. ii. p. 475), says that the scars were only for ornament; so likewise Palmer (Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xiii, p. 286), who adds expressly, "They convey no idea of tribal connection."

mental scars is correctly set forth. Wilhelmi, for example, in a sketch of the initiation of youth among the tribes of Port Lincoln, distinguishes the tribal marks on the shoulders and neck very sharply from the incisions on the breast and arms, which "serve only for ornament." * The distinction is no less clear among the Queenslanders. Lumholtz continues, after describing their tribal marks: "Besides these tokens of rank, the man bears also other lines, which serve only for ornament, and are found on the arms; they are short, straight, parallel lines which are drawn in groups across the arms, and when the wounds heal are not very plainly prominent. Here and there incisions are also made on the back and shoulder blades, but I have never seen incisions in the face. Only the men are marked with these various lines; they are forbidden to the women, for it is not considered proper for women to adorn themselves much. They have therefore to content themselves with a few lines on the breast, back, and arms, and attach great value to the decoration that is permitted them, while in spite of their sensitiveness in other respects, they have no fear of the pain when it is for their embellishment." † That the women of Queensland are not the only ones who suffer as martyrs to stern fashion is shown by a remark of Eyre's, who witnessed the completion of an operation on a girl in the south with which no special ceremony was connected. "Notwithstanding the terrible pain," he says, "the girls without exception have an ardent desire to have the marking performed upon them, for a well-scarified back is regarded as a material addition to their

* Wilhelmi, Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 68. † Lumholtz, p. 178.

charms." Brough Smyth finally sums up the result of the numerous careful accounts which were furnished for his work in the words, "Although the scars certainly serve as tribal marks, the pain of the wounds is borne more for the sake of embellishment than on any other ground." * Of the Mincopies, Man, who lived for years among them, affirms "that scarification possesses primarily the meaning of a decoration." † These judgments, which only reproduce the expressions of the natives themselves, are not unknown to Gerland, the thorough expert in ethnological literature; yet he believes them to be weakened by assuming that the original meaning had in the course of time been forgotten by the natives themselves.‡ Such a change of meaning might be very possible in itself. In this case, however, the question is not whether it might have taken place in such a way, but whether such a change has actually occurred; for until this is proved we have no right to cast doubt upon the direct, unequivocal declaration of the natives, in order to prefer the hypothesis we have constructed in our closets.

We have already said that it is very difficult for a European to appreciate the pleasure with which the Australians and Mincopies regard their scar marks. Yet taste in respect to bodily embellishment has undergone remarkable changes even in short periods, and we hope that a generation will some time arrive to which the wasp-waists and cramped feet of our ladies will appear quite as problematical embellishments as the dec-

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 296.

† Man, Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 331.

‡ Gerland, Atlas der Völkerkunde; text p. 4.

orative scars of the primitive hunters do to us. The attempt has been made to account for the contradiction between civilized and primitive tastes by the supposition that the scars are admired by the Australians not for themselves, but simply as marks of courage and endurance; but the circumstance that the scars are so highly prized by the women, from whom manly courage is not usually expected, is evidence that they are really borne also on account of their intrinsic beauty. Further, even a European is able to appreciate the æsthetic charm of scarification when he regards the elegant designs which the peoples of the Congo basin, especially the Bakuba and the Baluba, cut or burn into their black skins. In Australia and the Andaman Islands the designs are indeed too uniform and rude to overcome our dislike, yet even here the influence of æsthetic considerations can be plainly recognised. The lines and points are not irregularly scattered over the body, but the effort is everywhere shown to arrange the scars rhythmically and symmetrically. Of the meaning of the different patterns, unfortunately, we know nothing —nothing that tells against and nothing that tells in favour of Gerland's supposition that they were originally representations of guardian divinities.

Scarification has found practice only among dark-skinned peoples, for the scars stand out plainly only on a dark skin. For a similar reason, tattooing has spread only among the fairer peoples. It is practised in the lowest stages of civilization by the Bushmen and the Eskimo. The process consists in the introduction of a colouring substance, usually pulverized charcoal, under the skin; after the inflammation has subsided, the inserted design appears in deep blue, indelible colour.

Tattooing permits an incomparably finer and richer execution of the skin pattern than scarification, and has continued in use even among some more highly civilized peoples, especially among the Japanese; hunting tribes are still satisfied with forms which but little excel those of primitive scarification.

The tattooing of the Bushmen is as poor in designs as the scarification of the Mincopies. The specimens which Farini saw consisted of short, straight lines on the cheeks, arms, and shoulders; and Virchow found on the individuals whom he examined in Berlin just such lines, forming parallel rows.* Nothing has been learned as yet of their significance. A somewhat more highly developed form is found among the Eskimo, or rather among their women; for, curiously, tattooing, which is regarded in most other places as the prerogative of the masculine sex, is here a privilege of the women. Girls are tattooed in their eighth year, either with a pointed instrument, as in Polynesia, or with a thread which is drawn under the skin. The pigment is soot, and in recent times gunpowder. The tattooing is usually put upon the face, arms, hands, hips, and breast. Boas has copied some designs; the leading outlines, as appears from his description, are fairly constant.† On the forehead the eyebrows are duplicated by two oblique curves, two others are drawn from the wings of the nose across the cheeks, and a number of lines run in the shape of a fan from the lower edge of the mouth over the chin. The whole gives the impression of an intentional imitation of a man's beard. The

* Verhandl. der Berliner Anthrop. Gesellsch., 1886, p. 222.

† Boas, The Central Eskimo. Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1884–'85, p. 561.

designs on the hands and calves consist of parallel lines and rows of dots, between which appears sometimes a zigzag line or row of small rectangles. We know nothing of the meaning of this pattern. From its appearance one might at first consider it an imitation of an embroidery.* On the other hand, we know definitely, at least, that tattooing is regarded by the Eskimo as an embellishment. Cranz relates, in his History of Greenland, that mothers tattoo their daughters in early youth "for fear that otherwise they would not get a husband." This view is not contradicted in the least by Armstrong's remark that the designs serve also for the distinction of the different tribes and conditions. "In some hordes the lower (probably the poorer) women ornament their chins only with a vertical line in the middle and two side streaks, while the higher women draw two vertical lines down from each corner of the mouth." † Even in Europe, as we all know, certain ornaments served as signs of rank without their having therefore been anything else than ornaments. No support whatever is found for the supposition that the tattooing of the Eskimo possesses or ever possessed a religious significance—neither in any of their numerous myths, nor in the execution of the operation which is performed without any ceremony.

Summarizing the results of our investigations of the significance of primitive scarification and tattooing, we find that the marks serve partly as tribal tokens and have perhaps as such sometimes a religious meaning,

* Tattooed imitations of articles of clothing and decoration are very common, particularly in Polynesia. Consult pictures in Joest's book.

† Bancroft, Native Races of the Pacific States, vol. i, p. 48.

although this can not be proved for a single instance. But in other and the largest number of cases the scars and tattoo marks are for ornament. Nothing shows that the ornamental marks are less primitive than the social. On the contrary, if we must recognize the priority of either function, we shall have to decide in favour of the ornamental. The taste for embellishment is one of the first and strongest needs of man; it probably prevailed for a very long time before the idea of tribal connection was formed. In any case it appears far more natural to us that the decorative marks should have gradually become tribal marks by imitation than that tribal scars should have sunk to be merely decorative marks. Furthermore, there is nothing to prevent our supposing that the two groups have developed independently.

The Botocudo and the Fuegians are not acquainted with either scarification or tattooing. Instead of these we find among the former another widespread form of permanent decoration carried out to an extravagant extent—those lip and ear plugs (*botoque*) from which the name of the tribe is derived. The children receive the curious ornament usual with their tribe as early as their seventh or eighth year.* First, incisions like buttonholes are made in the under lip and the lobes of the ear, into which plugs made of a very light wood are pushed. In a short time the first small plugs are replaced by slightly larger ones; the process is continued until at last plugs are used four inches in diameter.† The lip and ear plugs, which are peculiar to the Botocudo only

* Wied, vol. ii, p. 5.

† Martius, Beiträge zur Ethnographie Amerikas, vol. i, p. 321.

in their excess, serve, without doubt, as tribal marks. The question arises whether, at least in the eyes of the natives, they are besides ornamental. The appearance of the plugs can not at all events be so disagreeable to the Botocudo as to Europeans, else they would hardly adhere so tenaciously to the painful and unpleasant fashion. Perhaps it has, through the hardening influence of custom, become less disagreeable to them; the plug may have been originally made and worn on account of its terrifying aspect, for its effect upon others —upon enemies. According to this supposition, the plugs may possibly at first have been as little regarded a pleasing decoration by the Botocudo as they now are by Europeans, but probably, chiefly under the influence of associations connecting them with tribal emblems, grew to be ornaments. On the other side, their value might be supposed to consist in their being testimonials to the courage of their wearers. In that case, not so much the plugs as the slits might be regarded as the true ornament, since the former only served to make the latter more strikingly prominent. All these interpretations are possible, but the only certain thing about the matter is that the Botocudo are proud of their plugs, so far as the ridicule of Europeans has not marred their pleasure in them.

We have already said that wearing the lip plugs is not the peculiar privilege of the Botocudo. The custom has gained a very wide extension among American tribes, and is found even in the most northern part of the earth—among the Eskimo.* While the

* But only among the western tribes, who have possibly received the lip plug from their Indian neighbours.

women are tattooed the men embellish themselves in a not less painful way. The lower lip is pierced under both corners of the mouth, and a piece of bone, ivory, shell, stone, glass, or wood, shaped like a European cuff-button, is inserted in each opening. Here, too, the wound, which has at first only the diameter of a quill, is gradually increased, till the opening is at last about three quarters of an inch wide. Bancroft * presumes that a considerable importance is ascribed to this decoration, for a religious festival is celebrated at the piercing of the lips. We have, unfortunately, not been able to obtain details and trustworthy particulars regarding the ceremony.

These and similar forms of permanent decoration are not at all or are only sparingly represented among the other hunting peoples. The Fuegians and the Mincopies do not wear any ornament whatever in their lips, noses, or ears; the Bushmen, on the other hand, hang iron and brazen rings in their ears; and the Australians, at least in some districts, pierce the septum so that they may wear a stick or a bone in their nose, the place of which is taken, on festive occasions, by two feathers.† The women on the lower Murray River wear a small nose-ring carved out of the wing bone of a buzzard.‡ Like scarification, the piercing of the septum forms part of the ceremony by which the youth "are made men." The belief exists among the natives of Gippsland that every one who does not put on the nose ornament will suffer a terrible punishment in the

* Bancroft, vol. i. pp. 47, 48. The festival is not described.

† Howitt. Brough Symth, vol. i, p. 278.

‡ Brough Smyth, vol. i, p 277.

next world.* If any one concludes from this that a mystic religious significance is attached to the Australian nose ornament, he will hardly be diverted from it by the objection that the heavenly displeasure could not take effect upon the obstinate candidate until a later time, and could therefore give no infallible explanation of the original meaning of the stick, which is now "gladly worn as an ornament that secures the good will of men and women for its owner." †

The study of permanent decoration has taught us that primitive man conquered his cowardice to gratify his vanity; variable decoration will show us that he brings it a still greater offering—he overcomes his indolence. Not only that he zealously collects everything that can possibly serve him for embellishment as he views it, but he applies to the fabrication of his necklaces, bracelets, and other ornaments a patience and a care which stand in striking contrast with his habits in other respects. It can be said without exaggeration that the primitive man attaches to his body all the ornaments he can get, and that he adorns all the parts of his body that can bear an ornament. Lippert has made the pertinent remark in his Kulturgeschichte that "the principle of the selection of the parts to be adorned is practical throughout and contemplates no ideal. Bearers of ornament," he says, "are all those naturally constricted parts of the body which recede above expansions of the muscles and bones capable of sustaining a load. These places are the forehead and the temples, with the bones projecting beneath them

* Bulmer. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 274.
† Thomas. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 271.

and the subsidiary supports of the ear muscles; the neck, with the prominent supports of the shoulders; the loins, with the projecting hips; on the legs, the region over the ankle; and on the arms, besides the wrist, the upper arm with its swelling muscle, and in smaller measure the finger. All these places are with savage men bearers of ornaments, not because any artistic conception of the body and its points of advantage has chosen them for that purpose, but because they have the capacity for carrying the load."

The dressing of the hair forms a transition from movable to permanent decoration, so far as it is governed by æsthetic considerations. This is, however, not the rule among primitive peoples. While the art of dressing the hair on the heads of African and Oceanic agriculturists has reached the boldest fanciful development, its achievements among the hunting tribes have generally been very modest. As regards single instances this is not strange. When the Fuegians, who let their rough, black manes grow in other respects as they will, occasionally crop the tuft over the foreheads, they are hardly governed in their operation by æsthetic but simply by pressing practical considerations. So the hair-dressings which the Botocudo of both sexes wear, besides their plugs, as tribal marks, have certainly no high value for ornament. They shave and cut the hair around the skull along a line three fingers' breadth above the ears, so that only a tuft is left covering the crown. We can not divine why and how they hit upon this peculiar style of dressing. The same tuft curiously appears among the far-distant Mincopies. It is worn on the Andaman Islands only by the men, and indeed not universally by them. The tonsure is carried still

further by the women, who shave the whole skull to two parallel lines of hair that extend from the crown to the neck.* Possibly this is not an ornament, but a symbol of the subordinate position of the women. The tonsure has at least such a meaning among many other peoples.† Only a few of the many styles of hair-dressing among the Eskimo men are of æsthetic interest.‡ The style of the women's hair-dressing, on the other hand, has undoubtedly been influenced by considerations of decoration. The description given by Boas fits all the tribes: "The women arrange their hair in two ways. In either case they part it in the middle of the head. The back hair is either twisted into a bunch that rises over the back of the head, or else is neatly done up in a knot. The side hair is braided, laid over the ears, and joined to the bunch behind. In the second way of dressing, the side locks are braided into small cues which reach down to a little below the ears and are held in order by a ring of ivory or

* Man, Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol xii, pp. 77, 78.

† Compare Spencer, Principles of Sociology, Part IV, § 361. There are, however, two circumstances that bear against this interpretation: the relatively free position of the Mincopy women and the partial prevalence of the tonsure among the men.

‡ On Davis Strait and Hudson Bay the men let their hair grow tolerably long, cutting it, however, square across the forehead, and hold it back by means of a band. Frobisher says that the Nugumint partly shave their heads; the Kinipetu shave the crown; the Netchillirmiut wear the hair short. (Boas, Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1884–'85, p. 558.) Most of these methods of dressing the hair evidently correspond with practical requirements. They probably serve besides as tribal marks. The tribe of the Iglulirmiut, on the other hand, possesses a real headdress, which, according to Parry's description, has an essential resemblance to the women's *frisure*.

bronze." * The tonsure is likewise found among the Bushmen, and most frequently, again, among their women. Moreover, both sexes smear their hair copiously with a mixture of red ochre and fat, so that it covers the head like a close cap. Not rarely, too, the men draw their scanty locks out as long as possible, the cues reaching at most not more than an English inch, in order to bind hares' tails, metallic buttons, and similar rarities to the tips.† On the whole, the Bushmen must be accredited with having carried the hair dresser's art to as high a development as is possible with a soil so unproductive of hair.

They do not, however, reach the abundance of fanciful forms in which the Australians arrange their thick, curly hair. The Australian *frisures* are the highest achievement of primitive art in hair-dressing. The women, indeed, let their black locks grow as irregular and tangled as do the Fuegians; while their Tasmanian sisters wore tonsures; but the men, on the other hand, particularly on festive occasions, apply much labour and pains to dressing their hair. First, the custom of powdering the hair with red ochre prevails all over the continent—a decoration which was likewise in much favour among the Tasmanian men. Sometimes the hair is so thickly kneaded with red ochre and fat as to form a hard, caked mass. The Queenslanders, instead of this mixture, put wax on their hair, which makes it shine in the sunlight as if it were polished.‡ With such excellent material more æsthetic forms may be

* Boas, Annual Report, 1884–'85, p. 558. Picture on page 561.

† Fritsch, Eingeborene Süd-Afrikas, p. 429.

‡ Lumholtz, p. 153.

executed. Feathers, tufts of moss, and crabs' claws are stuck in the viscous locks; they are sprinkled with the snow-white down of the cockatoo; they are arranged in long tufts, each of which is ornamented at the end with a white tooth. Costumes of this kind approach the marvellous achievements of the Fijian artists in hair.* The beard, too, is not neglected, and a white shell or the tail of the wild dog is often tied to its tip.

The dressing of the head appears so closely connected with the dressing of the hair that it is hardly possible in some cases clearly to separate them. So much the more distinctly should the theoretical consideration bring out the difference between the hair-dressing, which belongs essentially to the class of fixed decorations, and the headdress, which is movable.

The most important and usual piece of primitive headdress is the head band, which is worn by all hunting people, except the Eskimo. It exists in its rudest form on the Andaman Islands, where it consists of a rolled pandanus leaf. Not less primitive is the strip of hide with which some Australian tribes are content. Most of these, however, adorn their forehead with bands neatly and substantially made of kangaroo sinew or vegetable fibres, and painted with white or red ochre, which make a very effective ornament.† The

* Besides these styles, simpler dressings are found. Thus the natives in the interior of the Cape York peninsula singe their hair and beards.

† Compare the pictures and descriptions of Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 276. Sometimes the web is of human hair. Fillets are found in Queensland on which oval pieces of nautilus shell are fastened. The Narrinyeri wear fillets made out of the hair of corpses, which are wound about their heads by soldiers for amulets. Whoever wears such a magic head band will have keen vision, be swift of

Bushmen and the Fuegians wear likewise either strips of hide or bands of woven sinew, and the Botocudo wind around their heads cords decked with shining black berries and white monkeys' teeth. The head band, which afterward comes to be in so high honour as the symbol of the rank of a ruler, is also of practical service to the primitive man. It holds his hair and may occasionally carry his throw-stick, his arrow, or some other small implement.* But its principal service is as a decoration and an ornament holder. The Australian head bands frequently bear near the temples two small pendants of kangaroo teeth, while a wild dog's tail is attached behind, which falls down over the back.† On the north coast a white mussel shell is hung over the black forehead. But the most sumptuous part of the headdress rises above the fillet—a tuft of black emu feathers, the yellow crest of a cockatoo, the tuft of hair of the ears of a bear, the aigrette of a bird of prey, or the splendid tail feathers of a lyre bird.‡ Not rarely imitation feathers are worn, as freshly shredded sticks, which look at a distance like real feathers. Lastly, the inside of the head band is further elaborated by some of the tribes. Mitchell saw on the head of a man on the river Bogan a netlike woven fabric, which included all the hair, with a tuft of cockatoo feathers inserted in front. But the highest and most remarkable form of Australian headdress is

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motion, and in battle avoid all hostile spears. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 112.

* The Bushmen, for example, are accustomed to carry their poisoned arrows in their head bands.

† A good picture is given of it in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 276.

‡ Brough Smyth, vol. i, pp. 271, 274, 280.

the *oogee*, which the men at Cape York wear in the *corroborry*.* It is a helmet-shaped cap covered with a material like linen and painted with red ochre, over which extends, from one ear to the other, a tall fan of cockatoo feathers. Brough Smyth has accompanied his graphic description of it with a picture that reveals very clearly how much patience and skill the Australians are able to bring to bear upon anything that is intended to adorn them.

The Bushmen utilize their head bands in the same way as the Australians; they hang them around with small thongs, in which pieces of ostrich-egg shells are strung, and adorn them with feathers. Baines saw a peculiar style of headdress on two Bushmen, one of whom wore the head of a bird of prey and the other that of a crow on his forehead.† Birds have to bear the principal part of the expense of the primitive headdress everywhere. The Botocudo, according to the Prince Von Wied, glue large, bright-yellow feather fans in their front hair,‡ and the Fuegians weave feathers with great skill into their head bands; and thus stately crowns are evolved among them from the primitive diadems.#

The neck is the most convenient bearer of ornaments on the human body; and consequently it wears the richest decoration. Sometimes, too, it carries the

* The discovery of the *oogee* is of additional interest, from its having cast an unexpected light upon the darkness that rested over the cave paintings discovered by Grey at Glenelg. A specimen of the *oogee*, which fully corresponds with Brough Smyth's picture, is to be found, if we are not very much mistaken, in the ethnological department of the British Museum.

† Baines, Explorations in Southwest Africa, p. 143.

‡ Prinz von Wied, vol. i, pp. 12, 15.

Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. ii, p. 672.

single primitive piece of clothing; and hence that peculiar relation which exists in the lowest grades of civilization between clothing and ornament never presents itself so clearly as when neck ornaments are under consideration.

The only protection against cold, storm, and wet, which the Fuegians wear, is a skin which hangs from the neck over the back, and even this poor cloak is worn only exceptionally in particularly bad weather. On the other hand, hardly a man can be seen who has not adorned his neck with a pair of cords or bands. The variety of their neck decoration is astonishing when compared with the extreme poverty of their other possessions. In our museums may be seen neckbands of sealskin, cords on which bones, teeth, and shells of most various kinds are strung, woven fabrics of sinew of guanaco, and collars of feathers; and all these "useless trifles" are worked up with the same care as the weapons with which the designers have to procure their daily food.*

We make precisely the same observation among the Bushmen. Besides the scanty *kaross*, which is put on only in cold weather, a real load of ornament is carried —variegated bead-necklaces, which are bought or stolen from the neighbouring Kaffirs; cords of sinew twisted and coloured with red ochre, from which depend teeth, shells, cloths, turtle shells, antelope horns, and other similar treasures, which partly serve as receptacles for salve and tobacco, and partly as amulets, but are for the most part simply ornaments.†

* Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. ii, p. 672, with pictures. There is a good collection of Fuegian decorations in the Kircheriano Museum in Rome.

† Fritsch, p. 430.

Man found among the Mincopies, who are not acquainted with protective clothing of any sort, not less than twelve different kinds of bands and cords which both sexes wear around their backs. There were bands of rolled leaves, fine network woven from vegetable fibres, cords with various fresh-water and salt-water shells, mangrove seeds and red coral, bones of turtles and iguanas; and even human finger bones are made into ornaments, for while the well-known Andamanese bone chains are regarded in the first place as charms, the circumstance that they are usually very prettily adorned with little shells shows that they are worn besides as ornaments.*

The naked Botocudo hang those pretty chains which they wind around their heads also around their necks. The cords of bright-red *ara* feathers, which the Prince of Wied admired on the leader of a horde, are much too costly to be common.†

The most usual neck ornament of the Australians, which is permitted also to the women, is a cord of opossum hair, into which short pieces of reed are worked. This cord, which is sometimes not less than thirty feet long, is wound several times around the neck and hangs down over the breast.‡ The widely current neck ornaments of kangaroo teeth are of more modest size, but give evidence of very careful working. They consist of a thong of kangaroo skin, from which the white incisors hang in a close row. Every tooth is tied by the

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xiii, p. 401; vol. xi, p. 295. Pl. xii, Fig. 7.

† Wied, vol. i, p. 15.

‡ Picture in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 278. Bits of lobster shell are worn instead of pieces of reed on the lower Murray.

root into a small piece of leather, and this in turn is very neatly bound to the main cord. The time and trouble required for the finishing of such a necklace can not be little.* The Queenslanders are fond of cords to which a pair of large oval pieces of white nautilus shell are hung. The Tasmanians wore little greenish glittering shells strung on cords of vegetable fibre or sinew of kangaroo.

The most interesting part of all the primitive decorations of the body is that of the loins; not because it is particularly rich or peculiar—it is, on the contrary, rather scanty—but because it has become the evidence most in demand in the famous discussion concerning the origin of the feeling of shame. Thus, while one party asserts that the existence of a primitive covering of the person—which is nothing else than our loins dress or a pendant from it—can be accounted for only through an innate feeling of modesty, the other party avers the direct reverse: that the feeling of shame was first inculcated by the custom of concealing the parts. But, in the debate over the meaning of the dressing of the loins, we must not forget the loins dress itself. We look for it in vain among more than one hunting people. The Fuegians do not wear even a band around the loins, to say nothing of an apron, and the persons of both sexes are totally uncovered. Ehrenreich says of the Botocudo, "The wild tribes still live in absolute nakedness, and I did not observe among the Pankas the veiling of the genitals under a cover of leaves mentioned by the Prince of Wied.† On the Andaman Islands the

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 278.

† Ehrenreich, Ueber die Botokudos. Zeitschr. für Ethnologie, vol. xix, p. 22.

men wear either a narrow girdle made of pandanus leaves or a cord of plant fibres, but neither the cord nor the girdle conceals the sex organs.* The women, on the other hand, keep these parts of their body always covered. They wind not only one but several pandanus girdles about their hips, from the lowest of which hangs an apron of leaves. Among some tribes married persons, moreover, dress themselves with a girdle of leaves of somewhat different form. There is, further, a tribe in which the female dress, aside from indispensable neck and arm bands, consists simply of a light cord to which a pair of short bunches of fibre are attached "apparently solely for ornament." † The Bushmen tie a strap around the body, from which hangs a small triangular leather apron, which is drawn back between the legs and tied again to the strap behind. If this apron is intended to cover their nakedness, it fulfils its purpose rather imperfectly. The women wear an apron of springbok's skin, ornamented with beads and egg shells, which is slit in front into strips; "but the strips are so small and narrow that they do not serve as a covering at all, and in fact neither the young women nor the old ones seemed in the slightest degree ashamed of their nakedness in our presence." ‡ The most instructive forms of the primitive loins dress are, however, found in Australia. The men are, as a rule, provided with a girdle which is cut out of skin or woven out of vegetable fibres. This girdle is usually not ornamented, and probably serves not so much decorative as practical

* Man, Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 330.

† Ibid., vol. xii, p. 330.

‡ Barrow, Travels into the Interior of South Africa, vol. i, p. 276.

purposes.* Besides this, a second girdle is often worn, which is esteemed a precious ornament; a cord is twisted either from vegetable fibre or from human hair, and reaches regularly among some tribes the length of three hundred English ells.† Both pieces, as they are usually worn, cover only the hips; but occasionally a pendant is attached to the front of the girdle—a leafy twig, a bunch of emu feathers, a tuft of hair from a flying dog or a squirrel, a dingo's tail, or something of the kind, a pendant that hangs down over the sex parts without really concealing them. These pendants are generally put on only on festive occasions, more especially for the dance.

"When the men were preparing themselves for the *corroborry*," says Bulmer, "they attached to their girdles, in front and behind, bunches of strips of hide, although they usually wear no covering of any kind. What they wear is not for clothing but for ornament." ‡ The apron of narrow strips of hide, too, which is worn through many districts, is put on only as a festive dress, and an exclusively ornamental significance must, without doubt, be likewise ascribed to the aprons of white rabbits' tails, with which the Dyeri sometimes adorn themselves.# The only members of Australian society who always wear an apron for cover, even where both sexes otherwise go perfectly naked, are the unmarried girls; and they lay this dress aside as soon as they have entered into wedlock. The women usually appear without any covering of the

* That is first for carrying smaller weapons and tools, and secondly as "a hunger belt."

† Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 281.

‡ Ibid., vol. i, p. 275.

Ibid., vol. i, p. 281.

loins and the person. Only for their lascivious dances do they adorn themselves with a girdle of feathers which reaches down to about the knees.* The loins dress of the Tasmanians left, at least, quite as much to be supplied. Men and women wore a narrow girdle; "but only for practical purposes, not for clothing or ornament." †

These are the facts, and the question now arises as to what they indicate. Are those pendants of the loins-dress ornaments or concealments? The majority of historians of culture have decided without hesitation that they are concealments. The latest writer on the philosophy of clothing (Schurtz) gives an unusually energetic expression of this view. Having just cited several examples of the absence of any modest covering, he informs us that "the best evidence of the universal existence of the feeling of shame is the existence of the covering of the parts, which can hardly be otherwise satisfactorily accounted for"; and on the next page he rises to the categorical assertion, "The origin of dress for clothing can not be ascribed to other causes than the motives of the feeling of shame." ‡ If the existence of a covering is really the best evidence of the feeling of shame, that trait is certainly very poorly demonstrated among the primitive peoples. We have just seen that both sexes among the Fuegians and the Botocudo go entirely naked; that the Mincopy men never hide their nakedness; that in Australia men and women, with the single exception of the unmarried girls,

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 272, with picture.

† Ibid., vol. ii, p. 399.

‡ Schurtz, Grundzüge einer Philosophie der Tracht, pp. 9, 10.

customarily appear without any aprons*—in a word, that the feeling of shame is by no means a general possession of primitive tribes. This nakedness is not a temporary exception in the lowest grades of civilization, but everything indicates, on the contrary, that covering is the transitory, exposure the abiding, condition. The apron is put on in Australia only on festive occasions, but for every day the mere girdle is enough. And as here, so nearly everywhere the primitive covering of the sexual parts is only an ornamental dependency of the loins band; not as clothing, but as a decoration. Why should primitive man feel the necessity of concealing his genitals? The animals know no shame of this kind; whence has man learned it? An orthodox philosopher would settle the question with the observation that the feeling of shame is innate in every man. But if the philosopher is right, what shall we think of our children, who, until they are instructed by their nurse, exhibit their sexual organs without the slightest reserve, and can not understand at first why they are forbidden to do it? One who is not so deferential as to trust the words of another rather than his own eyes should tremble for his philosophy in the face of this childish innocence. In fact, the dogma that the necessity of concealing his person is innate in every man seems to us no more just than the assertion would be that the necessity of wearing a cylinder hat is innate in every Englishman. But it seems to have been overlooked, in the first place, that it is not the same thing whether a European philosopher or an Australian

* Compare the numerous notes in Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, pp. 735–738.

brave shows his nakedness. Westermarck has well observed on this point: "Where all go absolutely naked, nakedness would appear quite natural, for what we have before our eyes every day makes no particular impression upon us. But as soon as either the man or the woman began to put on a brightly coloured fringe, a pair of variegated feathers, a string of beads, a tuft of leaves, or a glittering shell, it could not escape the attention of his companions, and the scanty garment worked as the strongest inciter of the sexual feeling that could be contrived." * If innate modesty introduced clothing of the sexual parts, it was sadly mistaken in its means, for this clothing is not at all adapted to diverting attention from the parts, but serves the contrary purpose of drawing attention to them. It can not, in fact, be doubted that this and no other was the primary object of primitive sexual coverings. We can explain in this way why the Australian women, who at other times go naked, wear an apron of feathers in their lascivious dances, which are obviously intended to excite sexual passion, and why the women of the Mincopies in their dances, the character of which is not less unmistakable, wear a particularly large leaf.† All such dresses are evidence, not of the necessity of concealing something, but of the desire to show something. In short, the primitive covering of the person is, in its first and most important significance, not clothing, but an ornament, and, indeed, one which, like most ornaments everywhere, is intended to win the favour of the other sex for the wearer.

* Westermarck, History of Human Marriage, p. 192.

† Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii. p. 390. Man offers the curious supposition that this is done for the sake of at least a moderate measure of decency.

The origin of clothing for modesty's sake can therefore not be traced to the feeling of shame, but the origin of the feeling of shame can be accounted for as the result of the custom of wearing dress. The function of this primitive dress which we have just characterized would give it a general extension. While it is not regularly worn in the lower grades of civilization, it appears very soon in the further development of culture as the most indispensable part of male and female costume. Under these circumstances the exposure of the person is soon felt to be something uncommon, strange; and the collision with general custom calls out, as it does in all other cases, a feeling of embarrassment. The feeling of shame with its physiological symptoms—blushing, depression of the eyes, etc.—always arises when the individual becomes conscious of a violation of social usages. It is, in fact, nothing else than the reaction of the herding instinct. The women of Alaska are ashamed to be seen without their ancient tribal mark —the lip-plug. "We induced them occasionally," relates La Pérouse, "to take out that ornament, although they consented to it with reluctance, while they exhibited the same embarrassment and agitation as a European woman who uncovers her bosom." A European woman would indeed be ashamed to go on the street with bare bosom, because it is against custom; but she is not at all ashamed to expose her charms, according to custom, in the bright light of the ballroom. For no other reason does the negro woman of the Nile carry her breast open to view, while she carefully hides her lower parts with a leather apron. In the meantime a second and very powerful motive comes in to make her chaste aversion to exposure of the sexual parts as strong

as it is in the higher grades of civilization. In the lowest stages the occasional covering of the parts serves as a sexual excitant, but as the covering of them develops into a general and regular dress it loses its primary significance; for "what we see every day no longer makes any special impression." Consequently, not the customary covering, but the unusual baring, operates now as a sexual excitant. Cultural development has now, moreover, materially changed the social feeling concerning such excitants. The primitive man caused no shock to his associates when he concealed his sexual organs; but the more highly civilized man stirs up great scandal when he exposes them. In the interval a very important ethical advance has been made—sexual continence has become a virtue. This ethical advance is, like all other steps forward, the result of a social advance—the culmination of the patriarchal form of the family and of society—which regards the wife as the property of the husband, and condemns and punishes every infidelity on her part as a violation of his property rights. A woman, therefore, who exposes herself now commits a doubly aggravated offence against social laws; and sexual reserve is in fact found most universal and strongest in the female sex. It passed over to the men very gradually, and a marked difference in respect to it may still be perceived between the sexes. Covering of the person has thus really been derived, in the higher grades of civilization, from sexual modesty, but in the lowest grades it originated from a quite different feeling. It is, then, nothing but a decoration; and we have therefore a perfect right to include it within the scope of our review.

Decoration of the limbs can be reviewed very briefly.

The arms and the legs are adorned with essentially the same kind of bands and cords as the neck. Moreover, not all the objects which primitive peoples put upon their limbs are ornaments. The bunch of leaves, for example, which the Australian *corroborry* dancers tie round their ankles are intended simply to augment the rustling of the dance movements. Some arm bands are worn as amulets, like the strips of the skin of the flying squirrel which the men of the Yarra tribe bound to their arms to make them strong. The stout leathern straps, too, with which the Bushmen arm the lower parts of their legs, are designed less to adorn them than to protect them against the dreaded thorns of the steppes.

In our account of movable ornament we have so far omitted one primitive people—the Eskimo. They occupy, in fact, a wholly peculiar position. While all other hunting tribes neglect clothing and seek decoration, the Eskimo have first of all things to provide for a dress that will completely protect their bodies from the deadly arctic cold of their home. Yet they do not forget ornament; but their bodily decoration can not be forced into the category in which we classify, according to its character, the ornaments of the unclad hunting peoples. We find among them ornaments neither of the neck, hips, nor arms, but only of their clothing. They trim their fur garments with variously coloured strips of hide, and attach to them in front and on the back, and especially at the seams, leather fringes, teeth, jewels of bone and metal, bronze bells, and other similar objects. The women appear to do this as much at least as the men, and further distinguish themselves from them by an ornament which may be considered

a kind of hip dress, a tail-like prolongation of the back of the jacket, which hangs down to the bend of the knees.* This participation in ornamentation by both sexes distinguishes the Eskimo from all other peoples of their grade of civilization.

Shall we end our sketch of primitive decoration of the body without saying a word concerning change of fashions? The hunting peoples are the only ones that have not been subject to its caprices. Single parts of the primitive decorations are often varied according to individual tastes; painting in particular may be applied by individuals in the course of time in the most diverse and peculiar forms; but change of fashion consists in a general social modification, rather than in such various individual variations. Social decoration, however, by which we mean those ornaments that are worn alike by all the members of a tribe, and which form the largest and most essential part of a primitive dress after it was once adopted, has been kept unaltered by the hunting tribes. The descriptions of the oldest observers agree exactly in every essential feature with those of the latest.† This fixed persistency of primitive dress constitutes one of the most fundamental qualities distinguishing it from the changeable decoration of the higher peoples. It is observed that the duration of fashion stands in the closest relation with the different forms of social organization. Therefore, before we turn to the social significance of ornament,

* Boas, Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1884–'85, p. 554. Text and pictures.

† Those cases must, of course, be excepted in which primitive decoration has been changed or abolished through European influences.

let us consider it for an instant from the æsthetic point of view.

The ornamental dress of hunting peoples, though not in the figurative sense, can well be called brilliant in the literal sense. There is hardly another property that can give so high a decorative value to an object, in the eyes of primitive men, as lustre. The Fuegians attach a glittering bottle-sherd to their neckbands as their most conspicuous ornament, and the Bushmen are happy if they can get a ring of iron or brass. The lower peoples, however, are by no means solely dependent on the industrial wastes of the higher, and when they can not command the brightest treasures of barbaric and civilized decoration—precious metals and stones *—Nature gives them, nevertheless, sufficient means for satisfying their preferences. The sea casts bright shells on the shore, the flora affords them bright fruits and stems, and the animals are made to furnish them shining teeth, lustrous furs, and gaudy feathers.

We have already spoken of the æsthetic value of the primitive decorative colours so far as they are applied to the painting of the body. If one would appreciate the colour effects of movable ornaments, he should regard them not as against a background of his own taste, nor as they are seen in most ethnological museums, but should always consider them in relation to the colour of the skin for which they are intended. In our museums, with the cases coloured a uniform white, yellow, or maroon, one gets not only unsatisfactory

* The Australians attach an exceedingly high value to quartz crystals, which they use not for ornament, but as charms, which are kept carefully concealed from the sight of intruders.

but false ideas concerning these effects.* An Australian neckband of white kangaroo teeth produces scarcely any effect upon a light ground, but as soon as it is seen against a dark brown we can understand at once why the Australians like to wear it. Light-coloured ornaments are especially admired by dark-skinned peoples, while peoples of fair complexions for a like reason prefer dark ones. The yellow Bushmen, for example, adorn themselves with dark beads, which the dusky Kaffirs reject. Hunting peoples generally choose the same colours for their movable decorations as for painting their bodies. The Australians besmear their girdles, neckbands, and headbands with red, white, and yellow ochre, and the same or similar colours are in use among the Bushmen and Fuegians. Red *ara* feathers, as being the most costly ornaments, are the mark of a leader among the Botocudo. Others wear fans of yellow feathers in their hair, and yellow feathers wave likewise over the forehead of the Australian hunter. Cold colours rarely appear by the side of yellow and red in primitive dress. Blue ornaments are exceedingly rare, and the green nephrite lip-plugs of the Eskimo are quite distinctly set off by their colour.

We have accounted for the preference of the hunting peoples for feather decoration by the pleasing effect of its lustre and colour, but the æsthetic value of feathers depends at least as much on their form. It is not possible to describe and analyze the endless and various

* And yet a great improvement might be obtained, with relatively small expense and trouble, if it were agreed to place the ornaments on a piece of paper or pasteboard of a colour at least approximately corresponding with the colour of the skin of the people to whom they appertain.

grace which feathery forms display in rest as well as in motion, and it is likewise unnecessary, for everybody who has a feeling for visible forms has experienced it often and clearly. The feather has indeed maintained its original place in decoration throughout the changes of culture until to-day. It waves on the helmets of the civilized as well as on the headband of the primitive warrior, and while it disappeared long ago from the festal costume of men, it has become all the more widely prevalent in the dress of women. Even the Bushman's fashion of wearing whole birds' heads has been lifted into honour again by modern ladies—an evident testimony of the mental unity of the human race. Shells, too, are doubtless not prized least as ornaments on account of their form. Shell chains and shell pendants often consist, it is true, only of pieces ground into arbitrary shapes, but the Tasmanians, the Mincopies, and the Fuegians evidently preferred the extremely graceful natural forms. Whether the similarity of these pretty natural forms with those carefully worked out by men is a factor in this esteem, as Grant Allen thinks, must remain undecided. The further development in embellishment has not been so favourable to shells as to feathers. Shell ornament has indeed been richly developed in Oceania, but it has been nearly banished from the decoration of higher peoples.*

The æsthetic grace of the primitive decoration of the body is thus in great part a gift of Nature; yet

* The shell has maintained itself only here and there in the ornaments of the poorer classes. In Venice, for example, armlets may be seen made of little nacreous periwinkle shells. Shells, however, play a considerable figure in decorative work. The great goldsmiths of the Renascence made much use of them in fine vessels.

the part which art has had in it is not insignificant. Even the rudest people do not use these natural ornaments as it finds them, but endeavours to give them a higher value by working them in an æsthetic manner. The skin is cut into fringes, the teeth, fruits, and shells are arranged regularly into chains, and the feathers are bound into a tuft or into a crown. It is sufficient to indicate the æsthetic principles which are expressed in these different decorative forms. They are the same as govern the bodily embellishment of all grades of culture—the principle of symmetry and the principle of rhythm. The former is subject to the nature of the body, the second to the nature of the ornament. The symmetrical form of the body compels a symmetrical arrangement of the decoration. In fact, both the fixed and the movable ornaments of primitive peoples are symmetrically arranged, except in cases in which a ludicrous or terrifying effect is sought through a symmetry as implying something unusual and unpleasant. The application of scarification and tattooing on only one side does not show that a symmetrical disposition was not desired, but that it could not be accomplished. Decorations of this sort require many years for their completion. Asymmetrical patterns on the skin are, as a rule, unfinished; the completed figures are nearly always symmetrical.* The principle of rhythmical arrangement is likewise not far to seek. As soon as a man strings a number of teeth or shells on a cord to wear on his neck he forms a rhythmical series. But

* The scars, especially common in Australia, which are caused by incisions for sanitary purposes should not be confounded with scars for purposes of ornamentation.

if we were to conclude from this that the rhythmical arrangement of primitive decoration had in the main merely a practical significance, we have only to look at the common necklace of the Botocudo—black berries and white teeth in regular alternation—to find clear evidence that the maker was not insensible to the charm of rhythm, for otherwise he would have strung the pieces carelessly and irregularly. At the same time we see in this collar—which, with its two rhythmic elements, already represents a higher form than the single chain of shells or teeth—that it is not much harder for the primitive man to carry out the rhythmic principle into various and richer forms than to discover it.

We have shown repeatedly that primitive decoration owes its effect not to what it is only, but in a large part also to what it represents. An Australian loins dress, which is composed of three hundred white rabbits' tails, excites much admiration on its own account, but it will be admired most, probably, because it is an evidence of the sportsman's skill which the wearer was obliged to exercise in order to collect such a number of tails; and a considerable number of primitive ornaments made of teeth and feathers have no doubt a similar significance.* The appreciation of permanent ornament, which is purchased by bodily pains, rests primarily on associations of this kind. We certainly can not doubt that the Australians regard the scars which they raise in pale colours upon their dark skins as a real embellishment; but we may well question whether the price

* The war trophies which figure so conspicuously among pastoral and agricultural peoples are not found among hunting tribes.

they pay for them would not be considered too dear if the ornament was not at the same time an honourable evidence of their courage and endurance. The Australian hunter bears his scars with the same pride as the German student his sword cuts.

At the beginning of our study the difference between civilized and primitive ornament seemed so great that we had some trouble in perceiving a simply æsthetic value in the latter, but the more closely we regarded the primitive ornament the more like the civilized it appeared; and now at the end we have to admit that it is hard to find any essential difference between the two. There are few things which seem to have changed so much and have changed so little as ornament in the course of the growth of culture. Civilization has never succeeded in freeing itself from the decorative forms which strike us most strangely and most unpleasantly in primitive men. On the contrary, scars, the very rudest form of barbaric ornament, are worn with pride at the central point of the highest modern culture, and are regarded with corresponding admiration. While the sons of our higher ranks honour Australian scarification, the lower classes, after the example of the Bushmen, delight in tattooing. This practice is much more general among European peoples than is commonly supposed. We have indeed renounced lip-plugs and nose-sticks; but even our cultivated women do not hesitate to wear earrings, which are no less barbaric. We have already shown that civilized rougeing corresponds to certain kinds of primitive painting. But the most complete agreement is exhibited in the forms of movable ornaments. Our tufts, pendants, diadems, necklaces, bracelets, girdles—all these forms have been seen already

among the primitive tribes. They are indeed not grand discoveries, but the whole higher decorative art has not made any greater. The difference between a gold-mounted bead necklace from Venice and a leathern tooth collar from Australia lies not so much in the form as in the material and the workmanship, and this condition is typical for all movable ornaments. The development of decoration has indeed increased the range of material of ornament and refined its technic, but it has never been able to contribute even so much as one essentially new piece to the primitive stock of forms.

From this point of view the costly decorations, glittering with precious metals and stones, of the higher peoples appear poor as compared with the modest ornamentation of the hunting tribes, and the latter appears the richer when we consider it in connection with the scanty civilization in which it has developed. The specific relations between primitive culture and the material and technical execution of primitive ornament are so evident that they do not need to be demonstrated; but, as a rule, a contradiction, nevertheless, exists between the richness of the decorative elaboration and the poverty of the hunter's life, which appears so great that some historians of culture have felt obliged to solve it at the expense of the understanding of primitive man. We are thus brought back to the question with which we started: Why was so extremely rich a bodily decoration developed in the lowest grade of culture? We have indicated the answer more than once in the course of our study: bodily decoration has really a potent practical meaning to the primitive tribes—first as a means of attracting, and secondly as a means of

inspiring fear. In both cases it is in no sense a superfluous trifle, but is one of the most indispensable and most effective weapons in the struggle for existence.

All primitive bodily decoration can be divided, according to its purpose, into attractive and repelling, but this division should not be interpreted as meaning that each individual form belongs to either one or the other class; on the other hand, by far the most numerous articles of decoration serve both purposes at the same time. What makes a man terrible to men makes him lovely to women. This maxim does not apply alone to the military states of civilized Europe.

The first and most powerful motive that induces men to decorate themselves is undoubtedly the desire to please. But while we regard embellishment as a natural privilege of the female sex, in the lowest grade of civilization the men are, as a rule, more richly adorned than the women.* This anomaly seems at first sight to be an argument against our theory, but it is really an evidence in favour of it. The division of ornament among the lower men is the same as among the higher animals, and is accounted for in both cases by the fact that the masculine sex is the wooing party. Among primitive peoples, as among animals, there are no old maids. The woman is sure of marriage in any case,

* G. Bove observed among the Fuegians that the men were more solicitous about decoration than the women (Globus, vol. xliii, p. 157). Lumholtz says of the Queenslanders that they did not think it proper for the women to adorn themselves (Lumholtz, p. 178); and Brough Smyth remarks of the South Australian tribes: "The ornaments of the women were not particularly esteemed by the men. The woman did little to improve her appearance. She was satisfied if her natural charms excited admiration." Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 275.

while the man has often to make very great efforts in order to obtain a partner for life. In Australia, for example, most of the young men are obliged to remain bachelors for many years. In civilized societies the relation is reversed. Nominally, indeed, the men do the wooing, but really the women court the men, and consequently they are forced to embellish themselves, while men are accustomed to give no great attention to their own decoration. But if any one still doubts that the decoration of primitive men serves chiefly as a sexual attraction, he need only ask them why they embellish themselves. "To please our women," an Australian replied to Bulmer. On Flinders Island the surviving Tasmanians almost broke out in rebellion when the Government issued a decree prohibiting the painting of the body with red ochre and fat, "for the young men were afraid they would lose the favour of their countrywomen." * From this chief motive of primitive decoration we have a very simple explanation of its being applied for the first time at or immediately after the initiation that marks the entrance of the youth into manly age.

The man, however, is not a suitor only, but a warrior too. He has thus a double reason for decorating himself. As we have said, most of the ornaments which are worn to attract serve also to terrify. Red is not only a festal colour, it is also a war colour. The headdress of feathers, which increases the stature of the wearer, is worn both in battle and in the dance; and the scars on the breast, which gain the admiration of the women, arouse fear in the enemy. It is not

* Bonwick, Daily Life of the Tasmanians, p. 25.

easy to find a primitive decorative form which is exclusively intended to produce a repelling effect. Only a few patterns of skin-painting appear, to our eyes at least, purely frightful.

In the higher stages of civilization, bodily decoration has none of its primitive significance. It, on the contrary, fulfils in them a more extended and important function: it serves for the distinction and separation of different ranks and classes. There are no costumes distinctive of ranks and classes among primitive peoples, because there *are* no ranks and classes. Hardly a trace of social distinction can be perceived among the hunting tribes. In Australia the oldest and most experienced men of the horde enjoy a kind of authority; "but they give no orders, only counsel; for every father of a family—who rules despotically in his own household—every man is absolutely free." * "The authority of the leader in the Andaman Islands is very limited. He has no power to punish, and is not in a position to compel obedience to his wishes, but it is left to each one to seek his rights with his own hands." † The Bushmen live in complete anarchy. Among the Fuegians "no trace of a social organization or of a government has yet been found," ‡ and in the Eskimo tribes no man has a right to raise himself above another, so slight are the differences of power within a primitive horde. The gulf between rich and poor which rends civilized societies has not opened there. A skilful hunter, it is true, gets more game than an unskil-

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 790.
† Man, Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 109.
‡ Waitz-Gerland, vol. iii, p. 508.

ful one; but the best of them can collect no property under the insecure, always fluctuating, conditions of life, and he is at the end as poor as the others. We have gone somewhat fully into these relations because they contain the explanation of the constancy of primitive fashions. The change of styles in the higher social groups is essentially the result of social differentiation.* Fashion always moves from above downward. A certain style is worn at first only in the highest stage of society, and thus serves as a mark of class or rank. But for this very reason the lower ranks strive all the more earnestly to acquire the elegant dress, and in the course of time the dress of rank becomes the dress of the nation. The higher classes, who are still desirous as they were before to distinguish themselves from the lower, then invent or adopt another special form of dress, and the game is begun anew. Nowhere else, perhaps, can so clear a view of this mechanism of fashion be gained as in South Africa, that great sociological laboratory of Nature. The Kaffirs have built up a social hierarchy rich in ranks, and their fashions change in a rapid flow despite all regulation of dress

* Social differentiation is the most important reason for the change of fashions, but it is not the only one. In many cases, for example, the introduction of a new fashion is the consequence of a peaceful or a hostile relation with a foreign social group. But even this external motive is lacking with most primitive peoples, who, at least before European intrusion, lived entirely isolated in the inhospitable and unproductive territories in which they were confined by stronger and more highly civilized tribes. The feverish, rapid change of modern fashion is not a physiological but a pathological phenomenon; a symptom and a result of our nervous overexcitement, with its constant morbid thirst for more "original" and stronger stimulants.

and ornament; the neighbouring Bushmen, on the other hand, realize the social ideal of anarchism, and their fashion is as immovable as the water of a swamp. When we consider how powerfully the visible works upon the feelings, and how much consequently the costumes of rank and office contribute to the fixedness and maintenance of the social organism, our view is strengthened that the advance of civilization has not diminished the social significance of dress, as Herbert Spencer thinks, but has vastly augmented it. It may be asked whether the future development will correspond with that of the past. On one side a daily increasing danger is threatening decorative costume. The formidably advancing improvement of firearms is making military decorations dangerous as well as superfluous, and the time may already be foreseen when the waving helmet tassel, the bright colours, and the shining metallic ornaments must be laid aside. On the other hand, the democratic, or more properly the anti-aristocratic, drift of the times imperils the rule of ornament. But even if these humane efforts should result in freeing modern society, together with ranks, officers, and all the other perishable outgrowth of civilization, from their distinctive costume and ornament, and in leading it back to the liberty and equality of the Australians and Bushmen, there would still remain one social distinction, whether for good or evil—the difference between the sexes; and as long as there are two sexes, so long will there be personal decoration.

CHAPTER VI.

ORNAMENTATION.

The development of the ornamentation of implements in the lower grades of civilization has remained far behind that of the decoration of the body. Even the most wretched tribe of the Fuegians possesses a relatively rich system of bodily embellishment, while even the most highly developed hunting people of the north have arrived at only a scanty decoration of their implements. If we mean, by embellishment of implements, decoration by putting ornaments on them, it has no existence among several primitive groups. We have never seen an ornament on a digging stick or a bow of the Bushmen; and an ornamented production of the Fuegians is a great rarity. The idea of embellishment of implements has with us, however, a wider comprehension than this. We recognise embellishment, not in ornamental decoration only, but in the smooth and even finish of an implement.

Smoothness and evenness have, however, in most cases, primarily not so much an æsthetic as a practical value. An unsymmetrically shaped weapon does not hit with the same accuracy as a symmetrical one; and a well-polished arrowhead or spearhead pierces more easily and deeply than a badly smoothed blade. But

articles are found among every primitive people which possess these qualities without any external purpose being discernible. The soapstone lamp of the Eskimo need not be so very regularly shaped or so smoothly polished to serve the purpose of giving light and heat. The baskets of the Fuegians would, without doubt, be no less useful if they were less regularly woven. The Australians always cut their incantation sticks symmetrically, but, from all we know of the use of them, they would be just as good if they were asymmetrical. In all cases of this kind it is safe to assume that the workman wanted to satisfy an æsthetic as well as a practical need. The object should be useful, but it should be pleasing too. This simplest form of embellishment of implements is not wanting, as we have said, among any peoples. Even among the poorest of the primitive peoples, the Fuegians, we find implements of admirable smoothness and evenness.

A real ornamentation, on the other hand, has been developed only among the Australians, the Mincopies, and the hyperboreans. Ornamentation is the single art of savages which has so far received a somewhat general and penetrating consideration. Within the last few years a series of very meritorious works on the ornamentation of lower peoples has been produced; but, unfortunately, not one of them treats of the ornamentation of the lowest peoples, to which our studies are directed. Primitive ornamentation is a field which a student here and there has occasionally glanced at, but nobody has gone into. We shall have to clear the way with our own hands.

The forms that grow on this niggardly soil are neither luxuriant nor diversified. The designs which

the Australians, Mincopies, and partly the hyperboreans scratch and paint on their implements remind Europeans of simple geometrical figures. These primitive ornaments are usually described as geometrical; and, as it is not difficult to confound the name with the thing, the geometrical designs are occasionally brought forward in evidence of the natural love of

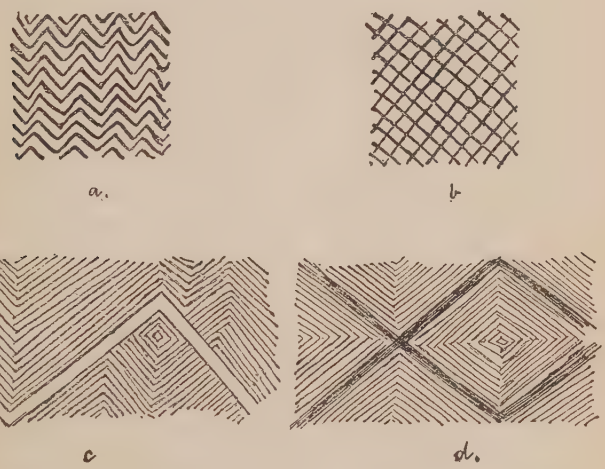


Fig. 1.—Australian scratched Designs from Shields and Clubs. (After Brough Smyth.)

the simplest men for the simplest æsthetic relations, although this preference needs no proof, for it is established *a priori* like most of the philosophy of art. But primitive ornaments are not what they appear. We shall see that fundamentally they have nothing in common with geometrical figures.

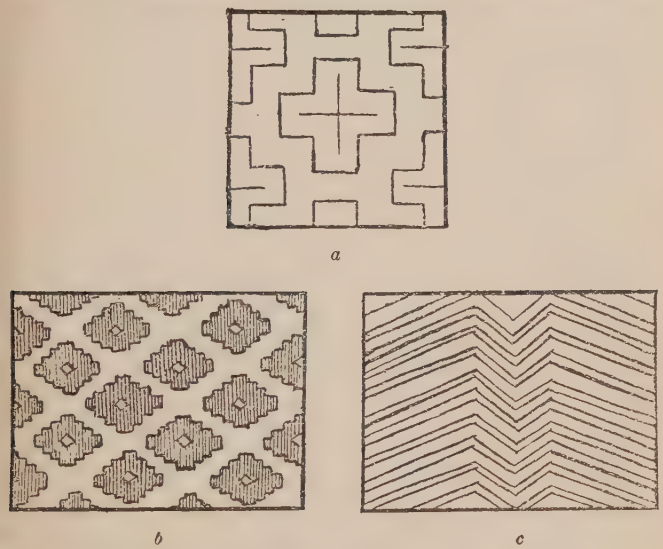
Figures constructed with entire freedom nowhere play any important part in ornamentation. They are comparatively rare among civilized, and will be sought

in vain among the primitive, peoples. In general, ornamentation does not draw its motives at all from fancy, but from Nature and practical art.

The ornamentations of primitive peoples are derived for the most part from the former source; they are copies of natural forms. Our own ornamental art likewise applies such natural motives in richest measure; we see them everywhere in our immediate surroundings —on carpets, tapestry, vases; there is not an ornamented object that is not adorned with leaf, flower, or vine work. But while the ornamentation of the civilized peoples prefers to choose its motives from the world of plants, primitive ornamentation is limited almost entirely to human and animal forms. Plant ornament, which occurs here so richly and gracefully, is there not to be discerned even in the germ. We shall see hereafter that this difference has a deep significance.

It is, indeed, not always easy to discover the original form of a primitive ornament. When we contemplate the zigzag or lozenge pattern on an Australian shield, our theory that it is derived from animal forms undoubtedly seems to be hazardous; and it appears to be doubly hazardous when we acknowledge that in most cases we can not directly substantiate it. It would certainly be a wonder if we could. Australian ornamentation has never been studied systematically. Even in the comprehensive work of Brough Smyth it is dismissed with a few very general and very superficial remarks. No one has ever, in fact, taken the trouble to question the aborigines concerning the meaning of their various designs. What is there, then, under such circumstances to justify our explanation? First, the fact that most of the ornaments of lower peoples that have

been studied as the Australian ornaments ought to have been studied, have been found to be imitations of animal or human forms. Nowhere is there ornamentation of so distinct a "geometrical" character as among the Brazilian tribes. Its rectilinear patterns suggest anything else than natural forms to a European who looks at them in a museum. But Ehrenreich, who studied them



a *b* *c*

Fig. 2.—Ornaments of the Karaya. (After Ehrenreich.)

on the spot, has irrefragably demonstrated that they are nevertheless nothing but animals or parts of animals. "In the chief's house of the Bakairi," he says, "stretching like a frieze along the wall, are black tablets of bark painted in white earth with characteristic fish figures and designs of all the ornaments used by the Bakairi, the proper meaning of which we could hereby easily

find out. The important fact in the history of civilization was thus established that all these figures appearing to be geometrical drawings are really abbreviated, partly conventionalized representations of concrete objects, mostly of animals. Thus, a waving line with alternating points represents the gigantic serpent, the anaconda, which is marked by large dark spots; a rhombus, with its angles filled out in black, denotes a lagoon fish; while a triangle signifies not that simple geometrical figure, but the little three-cornered garment of the women." * The ornaments of the Karaya consist of designs in zigzag lines, curves, points, lozenges, and peculiar interrupted meanderings, while squares and triangles are only casually introduced (as, for example, in the filling out of the figures), and circles are wholly wanting. As in the ornamentation of the Xingu tribes, definite concrete types lie at the bottom of these apparently quite arbitrarily chosen geometrical combinations, of which the characteristic features at most are repeated, conventionalized, in them. It is not, unfortunately, always possible to ascertain with certainty what natural object is intended. The frequently recurring cross (Fig. 2, *a*), which has so often given occasion, in America, for airy hypothesis, is here nothing but a kind of lizard. Whoever has seen the large, stumpy-knobbed wasps' nest of the logwood forests will recognise its characteristic mark at once in the comb ornament (Fig. 2, *b*). We likewise mention as peculiarly characteristic the bat with outspread wings (Fig. 2, *c*), as well as the most frequently occurring snake patterns (as Fig. 3, *b*, the rattlesnake, and Fig. 3, *c*, the

* Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, vol. xxii, p. 89.

cassinauhe; another snake is represented in Fig. 3, *a*). Real drawings of men and animals, which we know so well among the Bushmen and Eskimo, are not found among the Karaya.* This discovery of Ehrenreich does not stand by itself, but is one in a considerable series. William H. Holmes has succeeded, by the

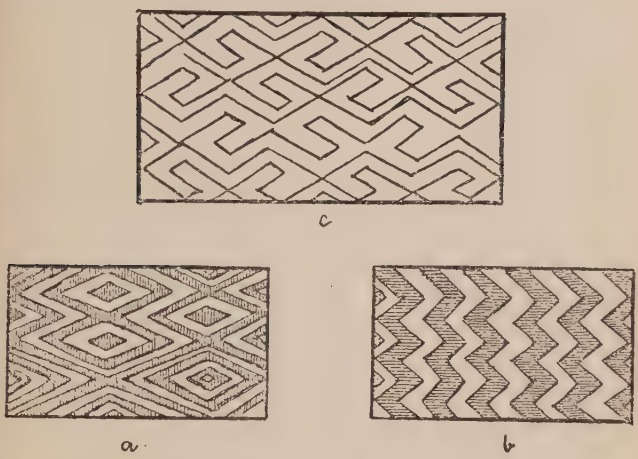


Fig. 3.—Ornaments of the Karaya. (After Ehrenreich.)

comparison of large series, in proving that a considerable number of apparently purely geometrical figures on Indian articles of pottery are conventionalized representations of alligators, while others are copies of the skin markings of various animals.† Hjalmar Stolpe, who studied the supposed geometrical ornamentation of

* Ehrenreich, Beiträge sur Völkerkunde Braziliens, p. 25.

† Holmes, Ancient Art of the Province of Chiriqui. Annual Report of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, 1884 and 1885, pp. 178–183.

the Raratonga-Tubuai group after the same method, has shown it to be in the highest degree probable that

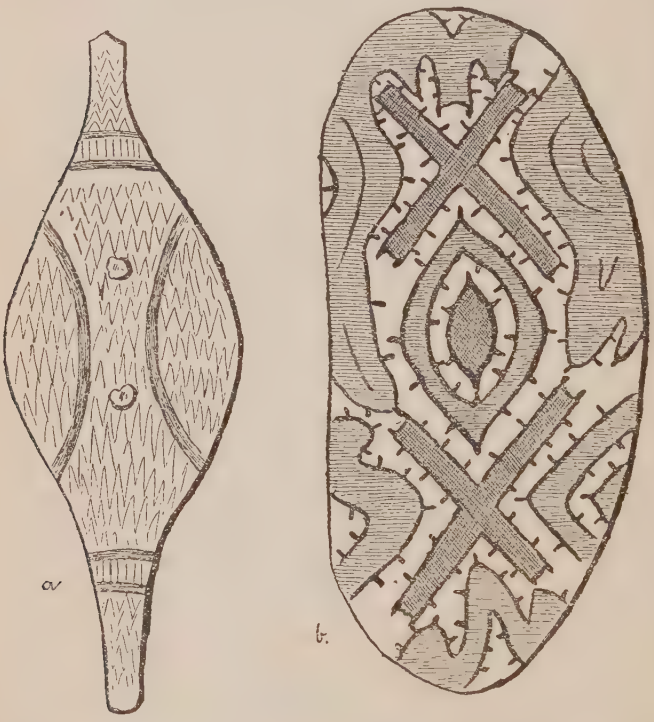


FIG. 4.—*a*, SHIELD FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA (After Eyre); *b*, SHIELD FROM QUEENSLAND (Berlin Museum). The pattern on *a* is partly scratched, partly painted; that on *b* is all painted.

the designs on them are almost exclusively composed of conventionalized human forms.* Still earlier, Lane Fox

* Stolpe, Entwickelungserscheinungen in der Ornamentik der Naturvölker, Vienna, 1892.

succeeded in tracing an apparently independently constructed motive of the New Britain people back to a human figure. In fact, wherever the question has been asked, the same answer has been returned. In this light the individual observations on Australian ornaments which we have collected from different accounts acquire decisive significance. "Some old peoples," writes Chauncy, "like to decorate their shields with all possible figures, such as birds, animals, and inanimate natural objects. The aborigines of West Australia decorate their small shields in like manner." * "They represent on their shields, in rude lines, the figures of animals—the iguana, for example," says Brough Smyth of the tribes in Victoria. "They copy Nature in the decoration of their robes. A man told Bulmer that he formed his conceptions from the observation of natural objects. He had copied on a stick marks derived from a larva which they called *krang*, and he had designed new forms from the scales of snakes and the markings of lizards. So far as Bulmer knows, the natives never copy the forms of plants and flowers in their garments and weapons." † The information imparted by Bulmer solves the mystery of Australian ornament. It tells us not only how we should interpret it, but also why we could not interpret it at first. If the whole aspect of an animal was applied as an ornamental motive we could, as a rule, at least approximately perceive the type even in the conventionally distorted figure; but most Australian designs seem to be only parts of animals, and to represent primarily their principal skin-markings; and in this case it is almost impossible for a European to divine

* Brough Smyth, vol. ii, p. 251. † Ibid., vol. i, p. 294.

their meaning, especially as the natural forms in question are almost always conventionally represented (Figs. 4 and 5). Our explanation is, as we have said, not strictly susceptible of proof; but the old doctrine which regarded the primitive ornaments as independently constructed geometrical figures is no more demonstrable. Our view is in perfect harmony with all else that we know of the nature of the primitive peoples, and therefore possesses a high degree of probability. Advocates of the other view have nothing to support their rather improbable hypothesis except the first impression, and we have learned through Ehrenreich that this may deceive. As long as no better argument can be opposed

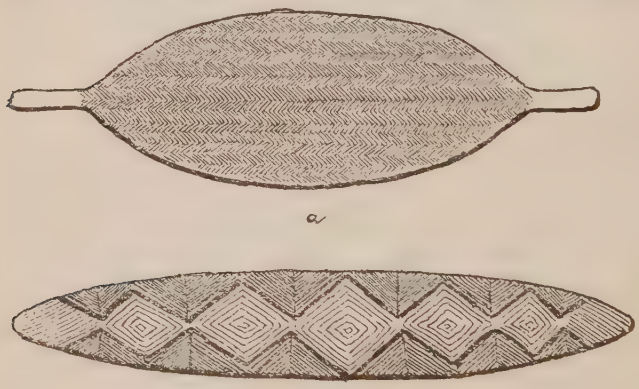


Fig. 5.—Australian Shields from Victoria, with Scratched Designs. (After Brough Smyth.)

to us, we therefore believe we are fully justified in explaining the design on the shield from Queensland (Fig. 4, *b*) as being not a geometrical construction, but the imitation of a snake's skin; the bark shield (Fig. 4,

a) as the imitation of a bird; and the lozenge-shaped and zigzag hatching on the other pieces (Fig. 5, *a b*) as conventionalized representations of feathers, hairs, and scales. Besides skin patterns of this kind, Australian ornamentation utilizes the whole outline of men and

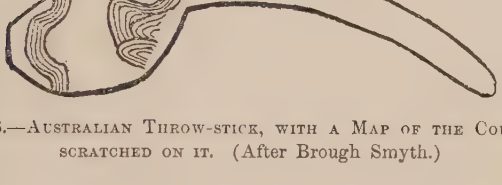


Fig. 6.—Australian Throw-stick, with a Map of the Country scratched on it. (After Brough Smyth.)

animals. Outlines of kangaroos, lizards, snakes, and fishes are found frequently scratched on clubs and throw-sticks; and perhaps most frequently the figure of a *corroborry* dancer in his characteristic sprawling attitude. The execution of the figures is generally extremely rude and conventional, but their meaning is nearly always immediately comprehensible. All the more problematical appear a series of other motives seen on certain weapons, sometimes alone, sometimes associated with those figures. The mark on the throw-stick (Fig. 6) is indeed of so curious a character that it would certainly have continued to be a puzzle to us, if it had not been explained by the Australians themselves. This snare of lines is really nothing else than a map. "It represents a lagoon, and probably a branch of the Broken River, and the space between the lines is the region in which the tribe of the owner of the weapon dwelt." * Other hunting peoples know

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 284.

how to draw maps. We are acquainted especially with excellent sketches by the Eskimo; but among no other

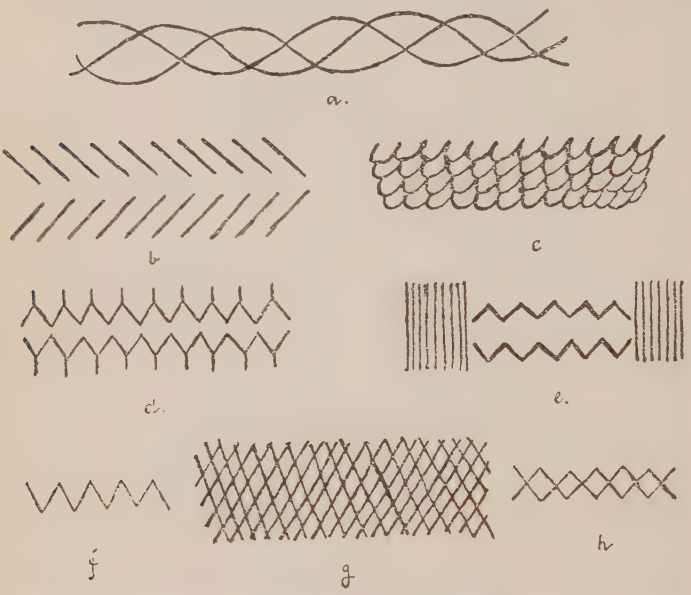


Fig. 7.—Ornaments of the Mincopies. (From Man.) *a*, with white clay painted on bows and eating plates; *b*, painted on girdles; *c*, with white on shells; *d* and *e*, with white on women's girdles and frontlets; *f*, with yellow and white on bows, pails, canoes, and oars; *g*, scratched on women's girdles and painted with white on time-boards; *h*, with white and brown on girdles, bands, plates, and shells.

people than the Australians has the idea of decorating their weapons and implements with maps been observed. It is certainly evident that the maps of the Australians are to be regarded, not as in the first place ornaments, but as a kind of writing.

The ornaments which the Mincopies paint on their implements with white, brown, and red earth colours,

or scratch with sharp pieces of shell, for the most part resemble the Australian ornaments so much that one is tempted to account for them in the same way. But in this case no certain clew has been found. While it has been repeatedly said of the Australians that they take their motives from Nature, Man expressly asserts that the Mincopies always repeat the traditional designs without any variation. These designs are neither rich nor diversified. The circumstance that each one is only used for a particular kind of implement leaves us to suppose that they have a definite meaning. But Man, who gives the names of all the patterns, unfortunately

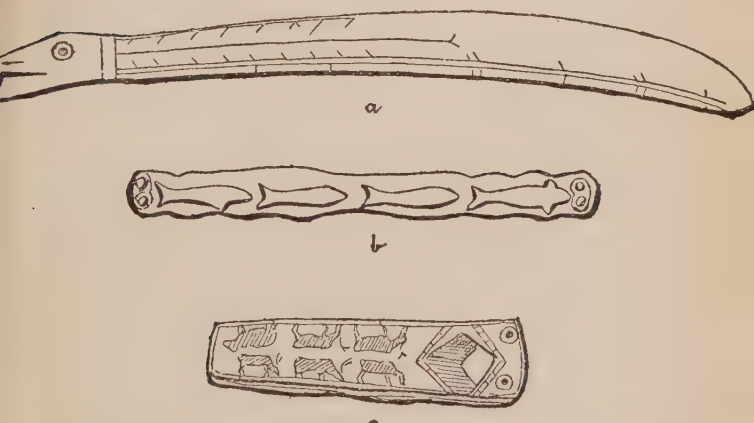


Fig. 8.—Bone Implements of the Eskimo, with Animal Ornaments. (After Jacobsen.) *a*, knife; *b*, pail-handle; *c*, arrow-smoother.

tells us nothing about their significance. It might, perhaps, be possible to determine the meanings by comparison of older and newer forms; but the material is very far from being sufficient for such a study, and

we shall therefore be obliged to leave the question whether the motives of Mincopy ornamentation have been drawn from Nature for the present unanswered. The decorative art of the Eskimo and their relatives, which is considerably richer and more lively, offers incomparably fewer difficulties. No protracted researches are required to prove that the hyperboreans owe the largest proportion of their ornaments to the observation of Nature. One need only cast a glance at the figures which they engrave or carve on their implements of bone and wood: the bird's head on the knife (Fig. 8, *a*), the fishes on the pail-handle (Fig. 8, *b*), the reindeers on the arrow-smoother (Fig. 8, *c*), are all so well characterized that it is impossible not to recognise them. The whole implement is often given the form of an

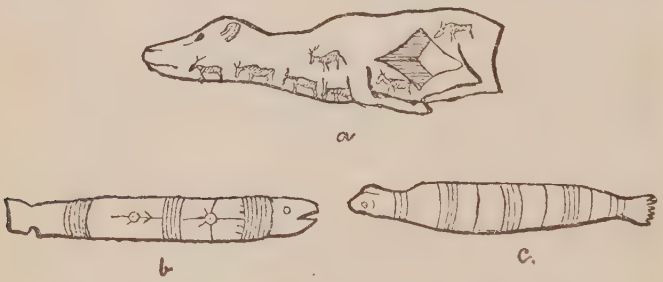


Fig. 9.—Bone Implements of the Eskimo in the Form of Animals. (After Jacobsen.) *a*, arrow-smoother; *b* and *c*, needle cases.

animal. Our picture (Fig. 9, *a*) represents an arrow-smoother of bone, which the maker has carved into the shape of a reindeer, and two needle cases (Fig. 9. *b*, *c*), of which the first represents a fish and the second a seal; and similar pieces may be seen in every large ethnological collection. Besides these free and natural-

istic figures, natural motives are also found, which have been stiffened into conventional form. We refer here to only one example, the small concentric circles with sharply prominent central points, which appear on

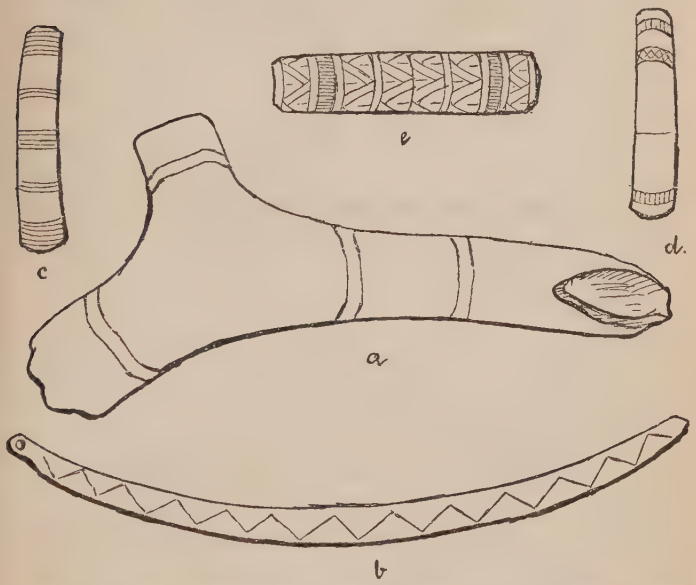


Fig. 10.—Bone Implements of the Eskimo, with Ornaments from Technical Motives. (From photographs.) *a*, staff of office; *b*, boring bows; *c*, *d*, and *e*, needle cases.

nearly every hyperborean article of bone. In most cases they undoubtedly denote eyes, and in others probably the sun or the moon; and in still other cases they are, in our opinion, to be regarded as substituted for beads which are highly esteemed as ornaments by the hyperboreans as by nearly all lower peoples. Taken in the last sense, these circles belong no longer among the natural motives; but they lead us

over to the second kind of ornamentation, which stands out in hyperborean art as unmistakably as the first.

The designs of this second kind are very sharply distinguished from those which we have just been considering. Not a single motive of them points to a natural prototype; the parallel bands, the seams, the zigzag and cross lines rather resemble the figures pro-

Fig. 11.—Ornamental Details of Bone Implements of the Eskimo. (From photographs.)

duced by tying, sewing, and weaving. We have explained the different patterns in characterizing them. If their execution leaves any doubt of their nature, a glance at their application will overcome it. They are all drawn from the second great source of ornament, *technique*, and are indeed imitations and repetitions of figures that originate in textile art, in the widest sense of the term. In comparison with the motives from Nature, these technic forms appear very scanty and uniform. Hyperborean ornamentation has indeed used them in tolerably rich measure, but it has given them only a very slight development. As a whole they hardly comprehend more than the simplest textile motives—the band, the stitch, and the seam.

Whether the ornamentation of the Mincopies has taken up similar technic motives can in general neither

be asserted nor denied. The first impression of a design seems to declare in favour of the supposition; but we have already learned that we can not trust a first impression in these cases. It would not be impossible that a pattern which looks like imitation weaving, or a band, is really the conventionally modified representation of an animal's skin or of a snake. Only in one case does the conclusion that a design is of technic origin seem to us fairly permissible. The Mincopies are the only people at the lowest grade of culture who exercise the potter's art. They make rude earthen vessels of various sizes with free hand, which serve them as cooking dishes. A large number of these pots bear an ornament which we regard as the imitation of woven work. The superficial resemblance would indeed give no great force to our supposition; it is far better supported by the fact that the Mincopies are accustomed to invest their vessels, for the purpose of holding them

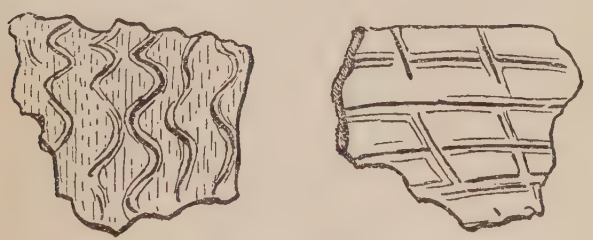


FIG. 12.—POTSHERDS FROM THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS. (After Man.)

and carrying them, with a woven covering—a usage which brings the thought of woven ornament so directly to the potter that it is almost unavoidable. We shall hereafter consider somewhat more thoroughly the ground of the transference of woven patterns to potters' wares.

In Australian ornamentation technic motives are certainly demonstrated in the painting of certain baskets of woven grasses and on the spears, the shafts of which are liberally adorned with carved or painted bands.* Patterns are not rarely seen on shields and clubs strikingly like bands and knit and woven work; and in many cases the origin of the design can be certainly recognised from this similarity. We have, however, already accounted for most of these patterns as conventionalized representatives of hair, feathers, or scales. While the first glance may seem to contradict this in-

Fig. 13.—Australian Spear, with Technic Ornament. (After Brough Smyth.)

terpretation, internal reasons are decidedly in its favour. It is not easy to understand why the Australian should impose bands and woven patterns on objects which have nothing to do with textile art, either in their origin or use; while on the other hand we can readily see that he would be very likely to ornament his weapons with conventionalized figures of animals and skins.

Colours are subordinated in primitive ornamentation to forms. The Australian weapons of offence are, as a rule, not painted; but the designs on the shields are generally brought out by polychrome painting. Most usually the sunken lines of the incised figure are filled

* A picture of two such baskets may be found in Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. ii, p. 58.

up with different pigments—with white and red, for instance, in alternation. In other cases the pattern is only painted. The colours which the Australians use on their implements are the same as those with which they decorate their bodies. Red and white are likewise preferred here, while black and yellow appear less frequently. Blue, which is rarely seen, appears to be mostly of European introduction. Among the combinations that are formed with the five colours, the juxtaposition of red and white conspicuously prevails. Further than this, no one has succeeded in discovering any leading principle in the arrangement of Australian decorative colours. It may, nevertheless, be supposed that the colouring of the Australian ornaments is often suggested by natural prototypes. The coloured design on the shield from Queensland (Fig. 4, *b*), for example, has a striking resemblance to a snake's skin. But the choice of colours may also not rarely be wholly arbitrary. Andaman ornamentation is much like Australian in colouring, as in drawing. The Mincopies, too, do not tire of repeating combinations of white and red lines. Besides these, a brown is used as it is in painting the body; but black and yellow seem to be entirely wanting. The ornamental art of the hyperboreans is poorest in colours, their patterns being brought out from the yellowish white ground of the bone chiefly by black, sometimes by red, but always in monochrome.

This is all that we can say with certainty concerning the origin of primitive ornamentation. It is little enough; but more can hardly be expected, for it is not easy to harvest where no one has sown. The problem of the origin of primitive ornament can be solved only by thorough and comprehensive investigation on the

spot, and this has so far never been attempted anywhere. Since it is not easily within our power to make such an investigation we must be satisfied with urging it by exposing the total poverty and untrustworthiness of our knowledge.

We have thus far called all the figures we have found upon the implements of primitive peoples, ornaments. We have nevertheless acknowledged, in opening the present subject, that this name belongs in strict right to only a part of them, while the others—such as

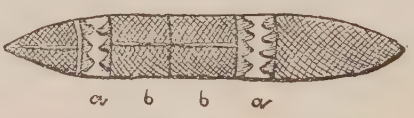


Fig. 14, *a*.

Fig. 14, *b*.

Fig. 14.—A Message Stick and a Shield from Australia. The message stick (after Howitt) contains in its scratched marks an invitation to an emu (*a*) and wallaby (*b*) hunt.

inscriptions, property marks, and tribal symbols—possess at least no purely æsthetic significance. We proceed to inquire whether the two groups can be separated. Our writing has generally so little resemblance to our ornaments that they can hardly be confounded; but in Australia inscriptions and ornaments are so alike that they can hardly be distinguished. If we should find the carvings of the message stick (Fig. 14)—which, according to the explanation of a native, express an invitation to a community hunt—on a shield, we should

certainly regard them as an ordinary ornamental design. A European could hardly recognise the inscriptions of the Australians unless they were on such sticks. The Australians do not, however, carve their runes on message sticks only. It is told of a southern tribe that "they are accustomed to mark important things on their throw-sticks"; and a similar usage seems to exist in the north, for Brough Smyth copies some figures from a Queensland boomerang, with the remark that "all these figures have a meaning that is intelligible to the blacks."* But if we should undertake, starting from those laconic hints, to separate the inscribed weapons from the decorated ones, we should be very soon convinced that all our pains were lost. There is no sufficient criterion. We do not as yet know with any degree of certainty whether the Australians have any conventionally fixed characters.† Equally insufficient is all that we are able to say of the relations of ornament and inscription among the hyperboreans. It has been supposed that the animal figures on their implements often have the significance of inscriptions—that, for example, six reindeer on an arrow-smoother are intended to express the number of animals the owner has killed. This interpretation is possibly correct in some instances, but it is not probable in most cases.

* Brough Smyth, vol. ii, p. 259, and vol. i, p. 285.

† "There are undoubtedly conventional forms among some tribes, and it is of the utmost importance to determine to what extent they are used, and by what tribes they are understood. Studies of these and other interesting questions were still in progress when it became necessary to publish the results of my investigations." Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. liv. According to this, we may hope that the results of those extremely important studies may yet be given to the world. Our knowledge of the subject is still as nothing.

The hunting peoples of the north certainly use a picture-writing. But the mark that characterizes the hyperborean as well as every other picture-writing—the conventionally and uniformly abbreviated form of the figures—is absent from these thoroughly naturalistic and freely executed drawings. Yet motives of a pictographic kind occur among the hyperborean ornaments—for example, those circles which we interpret as representing the sun or the moon. Such circles are often

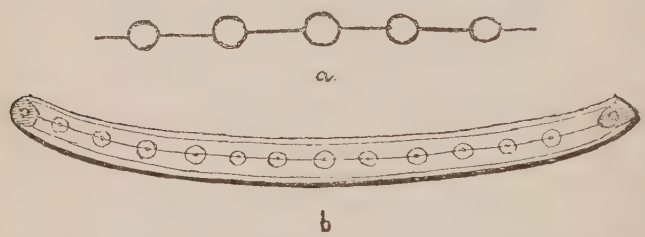


Fig. 15.—*a*, An Indian Picture-writing Sign for a Lapse of Time (after Mallery); *b*, Drill Bow of the Eskimo (from a photograph).

connected by a line into a regular series; and since a quite similar design in Indian picture-writing represents a lapse of time, it is very possible in this instance that the series of the hyperboreans has a corresponding meaning. But if we were asked whether the design did not represent a string of beads, we should have to admit that such an interpretation is quite as probable as the other. We may weigh and set one supposition against the other, but, after all, we have nothing but supposition.

Property marks are much more easily and surely distinguished from ornaments proper. It has long been known that among nearly all hunting tribes the

weapons of each individual are identified by a special mark; and it is not difficult to see why this use of property marks has been so generally developed in the hunting stage of civilization. The animal which is fatally wounded by an arrow or a spear does not always fall on the spot, but is most frequently found dead afterward in some other place. Under these circumstances the hunter would lose his prey if he could not establish his claim by the weapon still sticking in the wound. The Australian who has discovered a bees' nest cuts his mark in the bark of the tree; and the nest is from that time considered his personal property, as much as the weapons and implements which bear the same mark. Sometimes, however, the marks on the Australian weapons designate the maker rather than the owner. "Every piece," says Honery of one tribe, "bears the mark of the maker. The signs consist of curved or toothed lines and notches." * He has, unfortunately, given no pictures, and it is therefore impossible to decide whether these designs consist only of special signs, or are identical with the skin patterns already described. If we may judge for all, from Australian property marks figured in Reliquiæ Aquitanicæ, it can not be hard to distinguish such marks from ornaments, for in these examples the sign is formed only of some separate notches which present no similarity to decorative pattern.† The marks with which the Eskimo are accustomed to identify their implements, especially their arrows and harpoons, are tolerably well known,

* Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol. vii, p. 253.

† The scratchings which we have found on the backs of many shields, and which are supposed to be owners' or makers' marks, have a like undecorative character.

and will generally not be easily confounded with ornaments. They consist, as a rule, of straight or slightly curved lines, from which shorter lines diverge in various numbers and directions (compare Fig. 11, *b*). There are other more ornamental forms. Of such sort are, for example, the marks on the oars from Kotzebue Gulf, which we copy here from Choris, "on which various signs are painted in different colours, whereby each per-

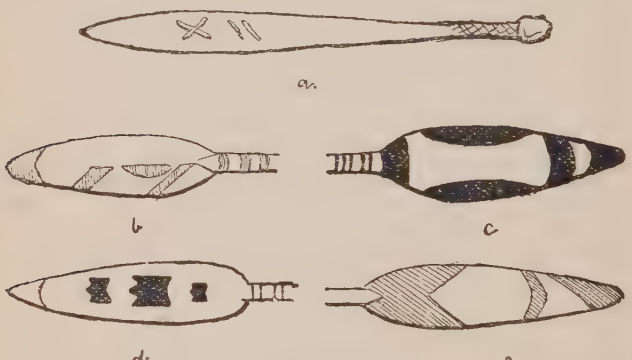


Fig. 16.—Property Marks. *a*, Australian club (after Lartet and Christy) *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, Aleut oars (or paddles) (after Choris).

son knows his property." The property marks of the Mincopies have absolutely nothing in common with their ornaments. Every hunter identifies his arrows and spears by a peculiar tying of the cord that binds the weapon to the shaft.

We are undoubtedly still very far from having a thorough knowledge of the primitive property marks; but so far as our knowledge goes, it gives us a right to say that only a relatively small part of primitive "ornament" served the purpose of marks of individual

ownership. The social property marks, the tribal and family tokens are, however, much more numerous, at least among the ornaments of the Australians. Collins declared that each Australian tribe used a special form for the decoration of its tools and weapons, so that it was possible to know to what region the object belonged; and Brough Smyth indicates what these forms were, at least among the tribes on the Upper Darling. "They put upon their shields the *kobongs* of their tribes." The kobong of the Australian corresponds with the totem of the Indian. It is in most cases some animal—a kangaroo, a hawk, a lizard, or a fish—from which the natives name their gens or tribe, and which they revere as a protecting demon, and perhaps as an ancestor. "The kobong of the native," says Gerland, "is his best friend, who always gives him protection and help." The Australian brave stands in the same relation to his kobong animal as the European knight to his heraldic beast; for our heraldic beasts were not originally those clever symbols of virtues which a later rationalistic interpretation has made them, but nothing more and nothing less than the protecting powers or the ancestors of the race. The nearest and most natural consequence of these conceptions is certainly the thought of using the figure of the family animal upon the weapon as a fetich or protecting power, and so the European soldier painted a bear or an eagle on his shield, while the Australian adorns his with the figure of a kangaroo or a snake skin.

The knowledge that the ornaments of Australian weapons are largely heraldic figures clears up two points which we have already mentioned, but have not yet explained—the frequent application of patterns of

animal skins and their peculiar conventionalization. The native whose kobong is a large animal—and this is the fact with the majority—could obviously not adorn his shield with a more appropriate tribal mark and with a more powerful fetich than the skin of his heraldic beast. But while reverence for his kobong pointed him with one hand to this natural decoration, it held him back from it with the other. The Australian indeed could not slay his kobong animal; yet he might, where the prohibition was not in full force, give himself a little indulgence. The real skin thus could not be used for the purpose; its carved or painted figure was therefore substituted for it. These figures are never true to Nature: most of them have in their angular and stiff regularity more resemblance to a woven piece than to a furred or feathered skin. This fact might at first sight be regarded as excusable in consideration of the slight artistic skill of the rude Australians. But the Australians certainly exhibit in other respects a remarkable talent for lifelike representation. The material and the technical execution, although they have certainly not been without influence, do not give a sufficient explanation; for engravings are abundantly found on Australian implements of wood which have been executed much more freely and naturally with the same means. Since, then, the reason for this style can not be traced to the capacity of the Australians, it must be referred to the will; and here it lies, in fact. These skin designs are heraldic figures; and heraldry in Australia aims as little at truth to Nature as it does in Europe. It therefore never happens that the real figure of a kangaroo or a snake is copied true to Nature, but the reproduction of the

kangaroo or snake pattern of a particular tribe is given. The Australian who first painted the skin-markings of a snake on his battle-shield probably tried to come as close to Nature as possible; while later artists no longer copied the natural prototype, but the artificial picture, which became a symbol; and since the natural aim, furthermore, was to stamp the tribal symbol in a fixed and easily recognisable form, and at the same time—and chiefly—convenience constantly dictated a more simple form, the representation became in course of time further and further removed from nature. In this way those curious figures were finally developed in which the æsthetic critic perceives evidence in favour of his theory of the geometrical as the prime motive of ornamentation. The Australians doubtless chose their tribal marks principally from the animal world; yet this usage is in no way general. We have become acquainted with at least one remarkable example of another sort—maps, with which some of the southern tribes mark their weapons.

As not all tribal marks are animal figures, so we have yet less reason to regard all the animal figures found on Australian implements as tribal marks. Nothing forbids our assuming that the natives frequently picture animals that stand in no sort of relation to their belief in the kobong, and for no other purpose than for ornament. Bulmer's informant, for example, arbitrarily selected the most various forms for his decorations.

Least of all does it avail to draw a conclusion by the "method of mutual illustration" as to the meaning of a portion of the Australian animal ornamentation from the "hidden sense" of the hyperborean animal figures.

The animal ornaments of the hyperboreans are certainly not fruits of totemism, for totemism, so widely spread over the American continent, has not struck root in the extreme north.* We do not know whether the hyperboreans use tribal marks of any kind on their implements. It is possible, yet the tribal bond has so little force for these peoples, living in small groups widely scattered, that it is hardly probable. Lastly, the ornaments of the Mincopies are not differentiated according to the various tribes, but according to the different implements; and they can therefore, in no case, serve for social distinction.

We have now found among the primitive ornaments inscriptions, property marks, and tribal symbols; it would be strange if religious symbols and magic signs were not also concealed among them. We have, in fact, found a considerable number of such tokens in the Australian kobong figures, which probably stand for fetiches as well as for symbols. There are besides in Australia what are called magic sticks—that is, wands and tablets—which the "wise men" use in their arts. They are almost invariably covered with carvings. Outlines of men and animals can be perceived on some of them; but most of them bear a tangle of curious figures, which we can hardly separate, much less interpret. These puzzling figures, however, so far as we know, appear only on these magic sticks, and can not therefore be easily confounded with ornaments, but as-

* At least we do not find it there, as in Australia and in many parts of America, as a general institution and principle of social division. The relation of the hyperborean witches to their serving demon, which is often represented as a gigantic polar bear, is, however, similar to the relation of an Indian brave to his totem.

sociated at most with inscriptions, with which they are perhaps affiliated. We are satisfied that more than one magical sign may be found among the figures which the hyperboreans cut on their implements; but, unfortunately, the descriptions furnish hardly any basis for the study of them.*

We have found but few technic motives among all the ornaments for which we have so far proved a non-æsthetic significance; it might be inferred from this that in primitive decorative art at least technic motives were chosen only from purely æsthetic considerations. What, indeed, should move an indolent Mincopy to cut basketry patterns on the outside of his earthen cooking pot, if not a direct pleasure in the regular design? Perhaps it was really his indolence, his lazy and persistent adherence to the traditional. Holmes has explicitly shown, in his treatise on the ceramics of the Indian tribes, why a primitive potter so often decorated his productions with textile patterns. Pottery is a comparatively young art; it is at least very much younger than basketry, which even the rudest tribes have rather highly developed. The basket is everywhere the forerunner of the pot, and has consequently been everywhere its prototype.† "The vessel of clay

* An Australian woman, when ill, told her European physician that her name had been cut in a tree by a native—a sure sign of her approaching death. The name of the patient was *Murran*, which means leaf; and, in fact, figures of leaves were found after her death cut on the stem of a eucalyptus, which the witch ascribed to a spirit (Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 469). Such figures on trees are also found near graves and at places where the initiations of youth have been celebrated. Nothing is known of their meaning.

† Baskets are still used by various tribes for water vessels; for example, by Kaffirs and several American tribes.

is a usurper, which has taken possession of the place as well as of the dress of its predecessor." The workman tries to make the new pot as like as possible to the familiar basket, in all respects, unessential as well as essential. He is not satisfied with giving the new vessel the convenient curvature of the old, but he also gives it the pattern of a woven basket; not because he considers it suitable or pretty, but because he is so accustomed to it that he can not easily think of a vessel without it. We remind those who find so conservative a taste irrational even in "savages" that the country people in some districts of our own civilized German fatherland always want the same paintings repeated on their dishes or on the dial-plates of their clocks, simply because the coarse roses on the dial-plates and the ugly white lines on the dishes "ought to be on them." The ornamental bands on the spears of the Australians can be accounted for in a similar way. The painted or carved band takes the place of a real band which was formerly in general use to fasten the blade, and subsequently became obsolete by an advance in technical skill.* May not the graceful "geometrical" scratchings on the bone implements of the hyperboreans have had a similar origin? It is, at all events, probable that the most of them are not mere imitations of technical

* In the Freiburg Museum are two north Australian javelins, which form a good illustration of our proposition. The quartzite blade of the first is tied to the shaft, the obsidian blade of the second is glued to it with a gummy mass, while the layer of gum which binds shaft and blade together is painted with a band ornament. The converse relation can also be conceived, in the sense that the fastening by gluing, as the less expensive, was to be at least superficially like the more perfect and costly binding. Even in that case the painting would have no æsthetic meaning.

forms, but are free renderings and representations of technical motives. In any case we may suppose that the decoration began here, too, with the imitation of real bands and strings, which was afterward applied purely from habit.

We shall not conceal from ourselves or from others that all which we have said here concerning the origin of technic ornament is based only on suppositions; but these suppositions have so high a degree of probability that we do not venture to ascribe to technic ornaments that purely æsthetic value which we have been obliged to deny to naturalistic ornaments. At any rate, our studies are sufficient to compel us to admit that a very large number of figures which we designated at the beginning as primitive ornaments—that is, as decorations—did not originate in the first instance from an æsthetic want, but from quite different motives. We have to acknowledge, besides, that it is in practice impossible to separate these apparent ornaments from the real. We fortunately can add that it is also not necessary. It has been previously shown that all these religious symbols, tribal badges, property marks and inscriptions have an æsthetic function besides their practical one, and that we can therefore regard them, as it were, as secondary ornaments additional to the proper primary ornaments. Instead of repeating these general deductions, we prefer to demonstrate them here by a single example. We choose for this purpose that group which is farthest from pure ornament—picture-writing. In order to satisfy ourselves of the artistic character of writing, we do not have to produce the miniatures of the middle ages, shining with gold and varied colours, or the splendid

press work of the renascence with its lordly majuscule type. Any letter is enough, such as the post brings daily to the house, provided it is not written by an extremely uncultivated or by an extremely cultivated hand. The first thing we ask of a handwriting is that it be plain; but this is not the only thing. The merchant who is looking for an assistant demands of the candidate not only a good but a handsome handwriting; and even those who do not earn their bread by calligraphic art make some effort—unless they have retained the idea from their gymnasial period that the most obscure and worst handwriting is the clearest and most proper evidence of an extraordinary genius—to write not only plainly but also beautifully. Look for a moment at an autograph of Goethe's, particularly at one from his later years—that album leaf for the United States, for example, which is reproduced in the edition of the Bibliographical Institute. If Goethe had done no more than write plainly, he would evidently have been able to spare himself many pen-lines. The beautiful formation of the capitals, the gracefully and yet firmly waving curves and strokes, the careful adjustment of the intervals between the lines—all this demonstrates that the autograph was intended to produce an æsthetic effect, not only through its intrinsic significance, but likewise through its external appearance. In fact, a writing of Goethe's like this produces on us at least a far more agreeable artistic impression than any of his drawings, which he contemplated with such great pleasure.* Calligraphy is treated and regarded

* One who is not endowed with the æsthetic spirit will perhaps be unable to comprehend why it has never yet occurred to any one

by the refined Japanese as on an equal footing with the other fine arts. Many great masters of Japanese painting owe their fame not less to their writing than to the figures which their pencils have created.* What is valid of writing is, as we have said, not valid of writing alone. The symbols, the badges, the marks, and all those signs which serve practical purposes as their first and essential objects, collectively belong, according to their form, to the domain of æsthetics. So far, however, æsthetics have not deigned to exercise their right of sovereignty. Fechner, whose clearer look perceived in the investigation of the simplest agreeable relations one of the most urgent tasks of æsthetics, commended and employed "the method of application of compar-

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to study the æsthetic character of handwriting. It is apparent that a comparative study of this material, than which hardly any other is richer or more accessible, might afford very valuable contributions to the knowledge of the tastes of all conditions, peoples, and times. The thought is indeed too banal to disturb æsthetics even for an instant in its ingenious speculations and experiments.

* "Kosé mo Kanaoka, the famous old master of the painters, and Ono no Tofu, the most highly prized Japanese master of writing, are esteemed in equally high degree" (Brinckmann, Kunst und Handwerk in Japan, vol. i, p. 174; compare also Gonde, L'Art Japonaise, vol. i, p. 195). The art of writing is not less esteemed in China. "The Chinese painters have been, before all else, designers and calligraphers. The nature itself of Chinese writing imposes on one about to trace the characters a study, an education of eye and hand, like those exacted by drawing. The lines of these characters have in fact tenuities, suppleness, abrupt stoppings, graces of curvature, sudden outbursts or gradual fadings, which a long apprenticeship in pencil-strokes alone can give. It is, besides, an accepted opinion among the *literati* in China that the characters of writing transmit to the idea they express something of their graphic beauty, and that the thought they envelop takes within them a delicate shading, a particular turn." Paléologue L'Art Chinois, p. 242.

ing forms and the relation of forms as they appear in the use." * But while investigating the pictures on tiles, on chocolate tablets, on writing paper, and in galleries, we have unfortunately forgotten to look for the "simplest relations" where they are to be found. It can not be said too often and strongly that the complete neglect of the study of primitive forms is the most serious omission of which æsthetics can be accused. We deal here with nothing less than the question whether there are universally valid conditions for æsthetic pleasure—whether there is, in a human sense at least, an absolute beauty. Æsthetes are accustomed to take the absolute validity of their principles as self-evident; but there has been already much regarded as self-evident till it was discovered that things may appear quite different in reality from the shape given them in the dreams of school wisdom. The universal validity of the æsthetic principles requires in any case to be first demonstrated, and it can be demonstrated only by a comparative ethnological investigation beginning with the lowest peoples. If it is proved thereby that the same principles which control the artistic creations of civilized peoples also avail for the æsthetic productions of primitive peoples, then the further question is raised whether these principles are presented in the same form in the

Fig. 17.—Mincopy Girdle. (After Man.)

* Fechner, Vorschule der Aesthetick, vol. i, p. 190.

lower grades as in the higher; or whether a difference can not be demonstrated between their newer or older forms, a development from ruder to finer, from simple to composite. We do not profess to give an exhaustive answer to these questions in the following remarks, but shall have to content ourselves with indicating a few of the most pertinent points.

When we compare the pattern of an Andaman girdle with the designs on our parlor carpets we find that among all the differences one principle underlies both. The oblique strokes on the girdle are repeated, just like the flowers on the carpet, at regular intervals, and, like the flowers, form rhythmical series. But this analogy is not limited to this single instance. If we continue our comparative observations we become convinced that the principle of rhythmic arrangement is not less plainly and frequently evident in the art of the lowest savages than in that of the most highly civilized peoples. We have a right, therefore, to presume that pleasure in rhythm is in reality a universal human property.* The essential feature of rhythm is the regular repetition of some particular unit; a tone, a movement, and—in the present instance—a figure. The rhythmic unit need not, however, be a unit in the strict sense; it is even the rule that it is composed of several elements; but it must in every case have the effect of a unit. The simplest conceivable case is evidently the one cited, in which a rhythmical series is

* We shall not here examine into the basis of this pleasure. It would furthermore be impossible to give a satisfactory elucidation of it. Gurney, in his book, The Power of Sound, has thoroughly exposed the insufficiency of all the hypotheses which have hitherto done service in the matter.

formed by the regular repetition of a real unit—of a point or a straight or a curved line. In the decorative art of the highest peoples examples of this extreme simplicity are comparatively rare, but they are very abundant in primitive ornamentation.* Rhythmic series consisting merely of oblique parallel strokes of red earth following one another at regular intervals are not rarely seen on the implements of the Mincopies. The Australians sometimes adorn the edges of their shields with a series of simple little circles; and the same modest ornament is in general favour among the hyperboreans. The series of animal figures which the Eskimo put upon their tools of bone still belong entirely to this lowest stage of development of rhythmical arrangement. No tribe, however, is limited to this simple style, but, as a rule, even primitive ornamentation takes pleasure in the formation of far more complicated rhythms. Advance is, in fact, so easy that it could hardly be avoided. In the Andamanite series of oblique lines, for example, it was only necessary to connect the upper terminal of each line with the lower one of the next, and a rhythm of a higher order—the zigzag line—was created.† The zigzag line, the rhythmic unity of which is constituted of two elements,

* In civilized Europe such simple series are still used almost solely in folk art—that is, in pottery. They may be seen often, for instance, on the borders of the beautiful earthen vessels which are sent annually from the home industry of Heimberg bei Thun to the Swiss and south German markets.

† We do not, however, intend to assert that the zigzag line originated in this way everywhere. An origin in a very different way can be conceived for it even among the Mincopies. It is our purpose here only to present it as a higher development of the most nearly related lower form.

is that form of rhythmic organization which prevails most decidedly in primitive life. It adorns most of the shields and clubs of Australians. It shines in red and brown colours on nearly all the implements and weapons of the Mincopies; and no motive is so often cut as it is on the needle cases, drill-bows, and pail-handles of the Eskimo. Yet the ornamentation, even of the Mincopies, has in many instances advanced far beyond the zigzag line. On the girdle (Fig. 17), for example, the two parallel lines of this form are only a part of a larger rhythmic unity. The graceful decoration of the needle-case represented on a former page (Fig. 10, *e*) exemplifies the complicated character of the rhythmic series which the hyperboreans sometimes constructed. In recognising an æsthetic significance in the rhythmical arrangement, which prevails so generally in the ornamentation of the hunting tribes, we do not mean in any sense to assert its æsthetic origin. On the contrary, we regard it as indubitable that the primitive artists did not invent this principle, but discovered it just where we have to find it—in their basket-work, which requires a rhythmical arrangement of the material. The textile pattern was probably imitated at first more from habit than on account of any particular pleasure in it, till men gradually became aware of its æsthetic value, and began to extend the rhythmical series for its own sake. It would be hard indeed to determine the point where mechanical imitation ceases and æsthetic continuation begins; but we have in any case the same right to assert that rhythmical division has evolved pleasure in rhythm as that pleasure in rhythm has evolved rhythmical division.

While the principle of rhythm was, without doubt,

introduced into ornamentation by the imitation of technical motives, another likewise generally dominant, formal principle—symmetry—may be deduced from the imitation of natural motives. We have seen that primitive decorative art prefers to use natural prototypes, and especially human and animal forms. As Nature has shaped these prototypes symmetrically, so

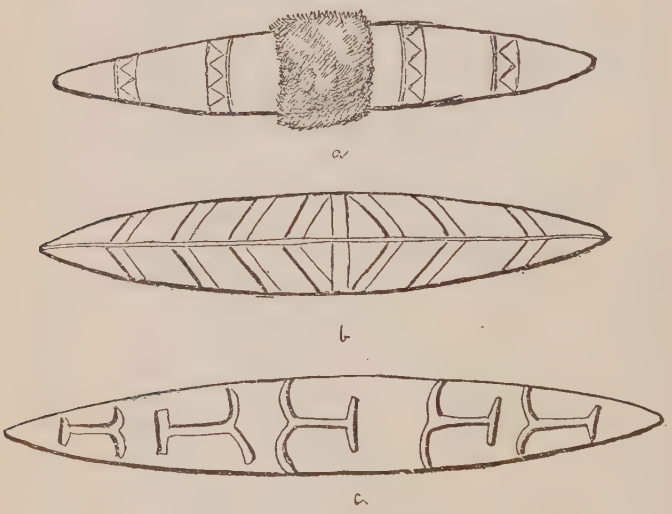

Fig. 18.—Australian Shields. (After Brough Smyth.)

art has formed the designs copied from them likewise symmetrically. That this deduction is more than an arbitrary construction is proved, among other evidences, by a special limitation in the application of symmetry, which has been observed especially in the ornamentation of the Australians or just in that school which adheres most to animal patterns, and also in ancient and Gothic decorative art. Let us look at the

three Australian shields (Fig. 18) in the vertical position, as they are usually carried. The upper one is decorated symmetrically throughout, in the vertical as well as in the horizontal direction. The designs on the two lower ones, on the contrary, are symmetrical only in the horizontal direction. The numbers of figures on their vertical halves do not correspond. We see in this peculiarity, which is common throughout Australia and is regarded in Europe as a law of good style,* a proof, as we have said, for our deduction. The partial—only horizontal—symmetry of these shield patterns corresponds exactly to the partial—only horizontal—symmetry of animal forms. But the knowledge that primitive ornamentation learned the principle of symmetrical form from Nature does not give us the slightest right to contend that it could not be derived also from other sources. We have shown in the beginning of this chapter that it was necessary to give symmetrical forms to implements and weapons for the sake of adaptation to their purpose; and it is self-evident that the symmetrical form of an implement called strongly for a symmetrical arrangement of its decoration. The principle of symmetry certainly has immediate and universal basis, for there is hardly a people by whom it has not been observed; and the carvers of the Australian shields as unquestionably recognise its value as the architects of the Parthenon.† In execution, primitive

* Compare Ruskin, Seven Lamps of Architecture, vol. iv, chap. xxviii.

† The sole exception that can be recalled is only apparently one. The Japanese always arrange their decorations unsymmetrically. But the peculiar charm of these unsymmetrical decorations arises from their connection with the symmetrical forms of the decorated

peoples fall far short of meeting the demands which we make upon the higher grades. They are satisfied when their picture simply makes a symmetrical impression as a whole; and in Australia and the Andaman Islands especially they put up with faults which would doubtless seem unendurable to a Grecian eye. Furthermore, there are in Australia, besides these symmetrical forms, which constitute by far the larger proportion, a number of wholly unsymmetrical designs. Clubs and shields may be seen in the carvings of which not a trace of symmetrical arrangement can be discovered: the deviation from the rule is most frequently exemplified on the throw-sticks. One is involuntarily reminded by them of the account cited above concerning a custom of a southern tribe of "marking important events on their throw-sticks." It is at least possible that some of these asymmetrical designs are not ornaments, but inscriptions, in which æsthetic considerations are only a secondary matter. Lastly, we have become acquainted with a considerable group of figures which are put upon weapons—not rarely, as it appears—for the purpose of designating the tribe or as marks of property, the nature of which excludes a symmetrical arrangement from the beginning, and which may be exemplified by the remarkable sketch-maps, of one of which a representation is given in Fig. 6. We must leave the further pursuit of these researches to writers on æsthetics. As our purpose here is less to answer questions than to suggest them, what we have said must suffice.

We have already found more than one occasion to

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objects. Japanese art is thus in no way independent of the principle of symmetry. It rather employs it just where it seems to contradict it.

point out certain relations between primitive ornamentation and primitive culture. Now that we have gained a knowledge of the general character of the former, we may try to obtain a general view of those relations. In a preceding chapter we have declared the economical occupation to be the essential factor in culture—the one that gives a definite character to all the other life-expressions of a social group. If this proposition is correct a connection should be traceable between the ornamentation and the occupation of the hunting tribes. The influence of the chase does in fact appear plainly enough in the general character of primitive ornamentation. The poverty and rudeness of its motives and forms are a result and at the same time a picture of the whole mental and material dearth to which these peoples are condemned by their form of production. Need—which, on account of their meagre and precarious means of subsistence, can never be kept away long at a time—forbids their looking beyond the narrow circle of those things which stand for their good or ill in the most immediate relation to them; and the instability which necessarily appertains to the hunter's life even in the richest hunting fields prevents that higher perfection of technical skill without which a fine and rich development of ornamentation is impossible. The poverty of primitive decorative art is all the more striking because it appears among all peoples in the same form; in the high north, as well as in Australia and in the Andaman Islands, everywhere we find, with a few unimportant exceptions, the same scanty motives. This uniformity points again to the influence of the occupation, which is similarly uniform. If the character of ornamentation depends, as has been so

often assumed, on the climate or the race, it should be fundamentally different among the Australians and the hyperboreans at least. The relations between primitive production and decoration can further be shown in details. The ornamental motives which the hunting tribes have borrowed from Nature consist almost exclusively of animal and human forms. These peoples choose thus precisely those phenomena that have the highest practical interest for them. The primitive hunter leaves the care for the plant-food, which he can not indeed dispense with, to the women, as being a lower occupation, and himself gives to the plants no special attention. In this way we explain why no traces are found in his ornamentation of plant motives which are so richly and gracefully unfolded in the decorative art of civilized peoples.* We have already remarked that this contrast has a deep significance. The transition from animal to plant ornament is in fact the symbol of the greatest advance that has been accomplished in the history of culture—the transition from hunting to agriculture. This proposition should not, however, be understood as implying that the transition to plant ornament was accomplished simultaneously with the change from the hunting to the agricultural life. The further development of ornamentation among the primitive agricultural peoples is first effected rather by the technical motives being more variously and carefully exe-

* It is known that primitive men seldom adorn themselves with flowers; yet the homes of the Bushmen and Australians are resplendent at times with the richest and most variegated floral displays. The unfortunate Tasmanians constituted the only exception. Bonwick says, at least, that they lived to decorate themselves with flowers and scattered flowers on their graves.

cuted, while the naturalistic motives are stiffened into conventional forms and thrown relatively into the background. Plant ornament is used, so far as we know, by only a single people of this grade, the Dyaks of Borneo, and was without doubt introduced to them from the Chinese and Indians. We look for it likewise in vain on the splendid Peruvian cloths of Ancon. On the other hand, we believe, it is plainly distinguishable on some of the oldest Chinese bronzes; and it was in general use in Egypt at a very early period. The rest of the motives of primitive decoration are derived from technical industry and from that branch of it which even the unstable hunter's life permitted and promoted —basket-work. The poverty and narrowness of the conditions permitted, indeed, of only a certain not very high standard of execution. The extraordinary æsthetic fertility of textile art could not appear except under more favourable culture conditions. The hunting tribes have utilized only its simplest and most uniform designs.

Both naturalistic and technic motives are transformed as well as copied. Sometimes the forms of the prototypes are given a richer and finer shaping in order to heighten their æsthetic value. Examples of this sort are the graceful ornaments derived from textile patterns on the bone pipes and the needle cases of the hyperboreans. Far more frequently the original forms are simplified, in order to make their representation easier. Many of the curious figures of Australian ornamentation, the meaning of which seems quite puzzling at first sight, doubtless originated in this way. The workman for his convenience has shaped the natural forms more and more simply and summarily in the

course of time, till finally hardly even a distant resemblance to the natural figure remained in the copy.* The technic motives, too, have often had to suffer under the pressure of this indolence. The Mincopy, for example, never takes the trouble to copy exactly a piece of woven work on his jar, but satisfies himself with a superficial resemblance. While transformation of this or other motives may result, no particularly lively or strong inventive faculty is ever revealed. Some historians of culture have ascribed to primitive man an excess of fancy. If he really possesses anything of the kind, it is doubly remarkable that he never exhibits even a trace of it in the productions of his representative art.

The form of primitive ornamentation is in large part immediately dependent on the material. The often observed preference for angular and rectilinear forms is explained, for example, in most cases, as a result of the imitation of textile prototypes. Indeed, this textile style is frequently applied, especially in Australia, in the representation of natural forms. We need only recollect how illusively the picture of a skin or of plumage on an Australian shield sometimes resembles woven work. Brough Smyth, whom this peculiarity has not escaped, traces it back to the incapacity of the "savages," who "can not, without an effort, make a large circle or a large curve, . . . for they appear to have the greatest difficulty in emancipating themselves from

* We have already observed that other factors are effective in these transformations. The whole process, which is not limited to the art of hunting peoples, can be followed best in Melanesian ornamentation. Compare Stolpe, Entwicklungserscheinungen in der Ornamentik der Naturvölker.

the control which geometrical figures exercise on the mind." *

Unfortunately, the value of his explanation is somewhat damaged by the illustrations Mr. Smyth has introduced into his work, and from which anybody so fortunate as to have eyes can fully satisfy himself that the Australian "savages" drew large curves quite as well and as often as small ones. According to our view, the true reason does not lie in the sociological depths into which Brough Smyth has immersed it. If the learned author of the Aboriginies of Victoria had once tried the experiment of scratching a figure upon a stick of wood with an Australian graving tool, with a tooth, a piece of shell, or a sharp stone, he would doubtless have remarked that even he, whose civilized mind was much more easily emancipated from the dominion of geometrical figures, could in this wise execute a curve "not without effort"; and would perhaps, in consequence of this experiment, agree with us in accounting for the Australian figures as a natural result of the necessary conditions under which the carvers

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. xliii. The whole passage is so typical an example of the usual treatment of primitive ornamentation that we can not refrain from quoting it entire: "Savages, when they attempt ornamentation, appear to have the greatest difficulty in emancipating themselves from the control which geometrical figures exercise on the mind. They can not, without an effort, make a large circle or a large curve. A snake drawn by an Australian is angular, and the neck of the emu is angular. Perhaps it is correct to say that whenever curved lines prevail in the decorations of a race (!) there is an approach to a state as regards art somewhat higher than that of the savage. It may be that of barbarism; but still the use of the curve indicates a higher culture than that known to the races who have exclusively geometrical patterns." In this way sociological laws are discovered.

worked. The geometrical character is, in fact, often and evidently prominent in the cut designs, while the simply painted figures are regularly distinguished by a much freer treatment, and chiefly by their easy and correctly drawn curves.* Gottfried Semper has demonstrated in his famous book that the artistic style of the higher peoples is very largely controlled by the technical conditions. We see that his proposition is no less applicable to the art of the primitive tribes.

It is not difficult to recognise the influence of primitive culture on primitive ornamentation; but it is not quite so easy, conversely, to determine the influence of primitive ornamentation on culture. Our concern is obviously only with those functions of ornamentation which it performs as ornamentation—that is, as decorative art; and, since we know that the æsthetic significance of decoration among hunting tribes is for the most part only secondary, we must henceforth expect that its influence also will be only subordinate. It might at first be supposed that the decoration of implements played a similar part in social life as means of attraction and repulsion with decoration of the body. Perhaps the ornamentation of the weapons of an Australian suitor is not wholly without influence upon the decision of the woman wooed, or of the relatives who

* Compare our pictures, particularly the spindle-shaped shield (Fig. 4, *a*). The geometrical ground pattern is scratched, while the large curves, at least on the similar shield in possession of the Freiburg Museum, are painted with red chalk. The large shield from Queensland (Fig. 4, *b*), which is in the Berlin Völker-Museum, is likewise simply painted, and consequently bears an abundance of large curves. All the other shields with geometrical patterns which we have reproduced are scratched.

have the disposal of her hand. Yet it seems to us a little hazardous to conclude concerning primitive conditions in this matter from those which prevail among our civilized peoples. The "inner qualities" alone of the candidate do not carry the point in Australia any more than they do in Europe; but, so far as we know, the person is far more regarded in the transaction than the always very inconsiderable property. Still less is the value that may be ascribed to the primitive ornamentation of implements a means of fortifying the social distinctions. It is certainly probable that the most distinguished men of the tribe, the best and most experienced hunters, possess more richly and carefully adorned weapons than the others; it is not less probable, however, that they exercise the same authority, even when they do not possess such. Only the decorations of the shield, finally, can serve as a means for terrifying; and the use of the shield is far from being universal among the hunting peoples, and is almost confined to the Australians. The designs on Australian shields are never put there to frighten an enemy, as are sometimes the threatening demoniac-looking caricatures on the shields of the Dyaks; but they are obviously intended only to be marks for recognition and sometimes amulets. The most important and beneficent influence which decoration of implements exercises on the life of the primitive tribes consists, in our opinion, in the stimulus it gives to technical development. Decoration demands and promotes a technical skill, which works in its turn to the benefit of practical interests. Even the strongest æsthetic needs are not competent to raise technical execution above the lower stages to which the pressure of economical exigencies holds it inexorably fastened.

Only when this pressure has been broken by means of the transition to the higher forms of production can the rich interworking between technical execution and ornamentation which we admire in the Polynesians and the Americans unfold itself. At any rate, the influence of the primitive ornaments on social life is operative through their extra æsthetic meaning, so far as they serve as symbols, property marks, or emblems, vastly more variously and deeply than through their artistic form. Ornamentation has in this lowest stage of development only a secondary artistic character; pleasing forms attach themselves to the practical, significant features only as the tendrils of a young climbing plant to the branches of a tree. But later on the vine develops faster and more richly than the tree, and finally the form of the tree almost disappears under the dense green foliage and bright blossoms of the vine. The tree ornaments, which at first play so relatively modest a part, continuously expand more widely and luxuriantly, while at the same time the secondary ornaments gradually lose their original meaning and likewise develop into purely æsthetic forms. There is thus a great difference between the ornamentation of the primitive and that of the higher peoples in nature, and consequently in influence. The attempt to follow the social influences of the higher forms of ornamentation would lead us too far beyond the limits of this work. They are certainly not insignificant, wherever, at least, the shameful prostitution of ornamental art to the interests of our modern manufacturing enterprise has not destroyed its charm and force.

CHAPTER VII.

REPRESENTATIVE ART.

Few prehistoric discoveries have attracted so general attention as the sculptures of the reindeer period, which were brought to light from the grottos of Dordogne. Among human and animal remains and implements of stone and bone were discovered a number of pieces of reindeer horn which bore scratched designs. The engravings principally represented animals, and were so clearly and correctly characteristic that most of them could be zoölogically determined at once. The wild horse, the reindeer, the wild goat, and the aurochs were unmistakable. The masterpiece was a dagger of reindeer horn, the handle of which was carved into the figure of a springing reindeer, a work which would do no discredit to an artist of the present time. The material of the carving was, as we have said, reindeer horn; and since, according to the judgment of experts, horn can be worked only when it is fresh, we have to assume that the unknown artists were contemporaneous with the reindeer in southern France; in other words, that the figures are of an extremely remote antiquity. Ideas concerning the age of the human race have been considerably extended since the discoveries of Boucher de Perthes; but no one would have anticipated such

artistic achievements from primeval men. The art work which was seen here corresponded so little with the civilization of the primeval age, as it had been conceived that an inclination was naturally manifested to dismiss the inconvenient discoveries by declaring them to be falsifications.* But it was necessary to prove

Fig. 19.—Dagger-Handle of Reindeer Horn. (From a cast.)

the fraud, and for this the circumstances under which the discoveries were made offered no point open to attack.† Thus the art works of the men of the reindeer period would probably have been laid aside among the other unsolved problems of prehistoric times had

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* Two pieces, drawings of a fox and a bear, said to have been discovered in Kesler Lake at Thayingen, are really known to be modern falsifications. The excavations at Thayingen were begun, however, as is well known, after the French finds had long occupied general attention.

† These finds have been more recently considerably increased. A series of carvings were exhibited in the anthropological division at the World's Exposition of 1889, which had been dug up in the grotto of the *Mas d'Azil*. Some pieces showed an artistic perfection which even far surpassed that of the famous reindeer figure of Laugerie Basse. An express assurance was in fact necessary that the discoveries had been made under the supervision of approved experts, to suppress the doubts concerning the age of these admirable sculptures.

it not been recollected that traces of a similar artistic activity had been observed by travellers among some of the rude peoples of the present age. Curiously, the most primitive tribes are the very ones which have distinguished themselves by a high faculty for making pictorial representations true to Nature.

Let us first consider the facts as they are presented in the several accounts. We begin again with the Australians. At the time when it was found convenient in works on ethnology and the history of culture to represent the Australians as a kind of half men, even the most inconsiderable artistic capacity was of course denied them. Even in the year 1871 Wake could repeat to the Anthropological Society in London Oldfield's assertion that "the Australians are not capable of distinguishing the picture of a man from any other animal unless some part, like the head, is represented in exaggerated size"—without being contradicted.* And yet some of the most interesting works of Australian sculpture had been excellently pictured and described thirty years before. At the end of the thirties George Grey discovered some caves at Upper Glenelg, in northern Australia, the walls of which were adorned with paintings. On the obliquely ascending roof-stones of the first cavern the white-painted upper half of a human figure rose from a black background. The head was surrounded by a crown of bright-red rays, probably intended to represent a headdress.† In the face, which was turned toward the observer, the eyes

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. i, p. 75.

† The natives in the north wear a similar headdress at their *corroborries—oogee*. Picture in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 280.

and nose were plainly marked, but the mouth was curiously wanting, as it was in all the other figures.* The face was white, and the eyes were black and bordered with red and yellow lines. On the arms, which hung down, the fingers were indicated by strokes. The short strokes which covered the body may have represented the scarification usual in Australia, or perhaps a garment of skin. The rock wall on the left bore a group of four heads in lively colours. "From the mild expressions of their faces I took them to be women," says Grey; "and they seemed to be drawn so as to appear looking up at the principal figure

FIG. 20.—AUSTRALIAN CAVE PAINTING AT GLENELG. (After Grey.)

* Andree, who thinks that the "Australian natives had acted upon the idea of preventing the delineated figures from speaking," is wrong when he says that "the Australian always avoids drawing the mouth." Andree, Ethnographische Parallelen, new series, p. 62. Examples to the contrary will be found in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 388; vol. ii, plate at pp. 257, 258; also in Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. ii, pp. 25, 95.

described above; each had a very remarkable head-dress coloured deep blue, and one wore a neckband. The two lower figures had on a kind of dress, and one wore a girdle around the loins. Each of the four faces exhibited a totally different expression; and although the mouth was wanting in all of them, two of them ap-

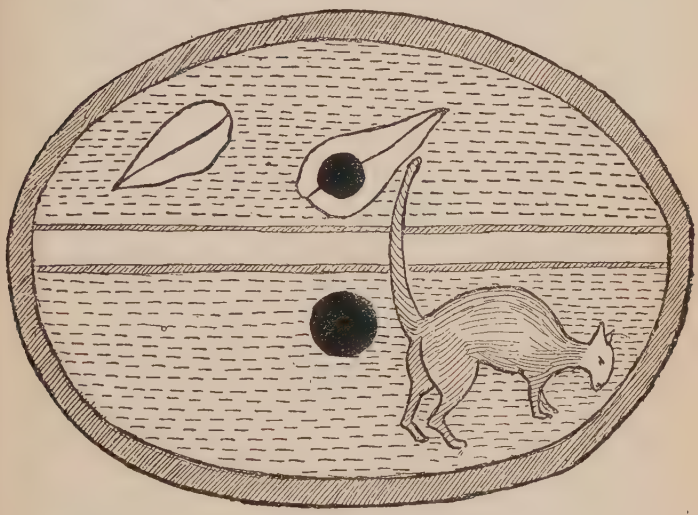

Fig. 21.—Australian Cave Painting at Glenelg. (After Grey.)

peared to me rather good-looking. The whole picture was executed on a white ground."* On the roof was a bright golden-yellow elliptical figure, traversed by red-dotted lines and divided lengthwise by a white band edged with blue lines, within which was a kangaroo drawn in red, among some figures that appeared to rep-

* George Grey, Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in Northwest and Western Australia, 1841, vol. i, p. 203.

resent spear-heads. By the side of this picture stood a human figure traced in red, bearing a red kangaroo on its shoulders, besides also a number of other figures of animals and men, which were very badly drawn.

In front of a second cave a human head was hewn in profile in the sandstone rock. "The head measured two feet in height and sixteen inches in its greatest breadth; the depth increased gradually from the even edges to the middle, where it was an inch and a half; the ear was rather badly represented; but the work as a whole was well done and far excelled the efforts usually accredited to a savage race." *

The most astonishing work, however, was awaiting the discoverer in the third cave. "The principal picture therein was the figure of a man ten feet six inches high, which was clad from the chin down in a red garment, reaching to the wrists and ankles, so that only the badly executed hands and feet were visible. The head of the figure was surrounded by a series of circular bands painted red, yellow, and white. Of the face, only the eyes were given. A series of red lines were marked on the outer band so regularly that they seemed to express some kind of a meaning, but it was impossible to determine whether they were intended for written characters or only as an ornament. Grey himself did not doubt that the paintings and sculptures in the caves at Glenelg were the work of aborigines. Yet this opinion has been so often contested that it seems necessary to verify it. It has been assumed that the work must have been that of some European castaway or of the Malays, who resort to this coast for trade, for it

* Grey, vol. i, p. 205.

was inconceivable that so rude savages as the Australians could have been capable of such artistic achievements. This capacity has, however, been demonstrated beyond a doubt, for we have Australian drawings that far excel these paintings in artistic worth. Further, the technical execution of the Grey figures exhibits the same characteristic traits as are found in all the works of Australian pictorial art. Rock paintings and sculptures are no rarity, as we shall see, in the northern part of the continent. "The colours, too," as Gerland says, who regarded the paintings at Glenelg somewhat skeptically, "are not remarkable, and are known to all the New Hollanders: the black is coal; the white and yellow, kinds of clay, one of which when burned gives red." * The subjects of the representations, with a single exception, are taken from the usual round of experiences of the aborigines. The figure in the third cave is dressed in a robe of a kind which the Austra-

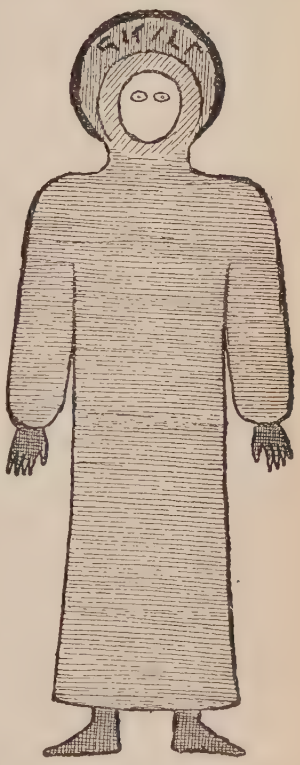

FIG. 22.—AUSTRALIAN CAVE PAINTING AT GLENELG. (After Grey.)

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 761.

lians, so far as we know, never wear. The feet of the figure, too, seem to be dressed contrary to the Australian usage. Finally, Gerland supposes that "those superscribed characters, as Grey has figured them, are letters from the Bugi or Macassar alphabet." * But even if it should be shown that the painted figure is a Malay, that will not prove that the painter was not an Australian. This question will be settled above all by the technical method, and a glance at Grey's copy shows that the execution of the figure in question does not differ in any essential feature from that of other paintings, the Australian origin of which is indubitable. In case the marks on the headdress are Macassar letters, the artist was probably a native who had had intercourse for some time with the Buris.† Thus we are justified in regarding the paintings at Glenelg, with Grey, as works of real Australian art. We have already said that they are by no means the only ones of their kind. Rock figures are very common in the north. Stokes discovered on Depuch Island, a small island of the Forestier group, a whole gallery of pictures, or, more correctly, of reliefs, which were cut into the smooth rock wall. "The red, hard crust of the rock had been removed from within the outlines of the figures, so that the designs were brought out in the original green colour of the stone. Many of the representations, the subjects of which could be recognised at the first glance, revealed great skill." ‡ The copies pub-

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 762.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 762. "Indeed, the New Hollanders of these regions visit the Malay countries not rarely." Jukes, Narrative of the Survey Voyage of H. M. S. Fly, vol. i, p. 139.

‡ Stokes, Discoveries in Australia, vol. ii, pp. 170 *et seq.*

lished by Stokes fully confirm this judgment. Most of the reliefs represent animals: a shark accompanied by a pilot-fish, a dog, a beetle, a crab, a kangaroo, etc., all executed as simple silhouettes, and nevertheless so strikingly characterized that they can indeed "be recognised at first sight." Man also is not absent, but the

FIG. 23.—AUSTRALIAN ROCK SCULPTURES ON DEPUCH ISLAND. (After Stokes.)

warrior, armed with spear and shield, which Stokes copies, is much more unskilfully drawn than those animals, and so likewise is the representation of a *corroborry*. "The number of designs was so immense that the aborigines must have been amusing themselves for a long time in this innocent way. While I was looking at the different figures—the men, animals, birds, weapons, implements, and scenes in the life of the savages—I began to reflect on the singular mental bent that led those rude men, perhaps at particular seasons, to this solitary picture gallery among the waves of the sea, to admire and add to the works of their fathers. They without doubt applied as much patience, labour, and enthusiasm to their works of art as Raphael and Michaelangelo to the wall paintings in the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican, and perhaps the admiration and applause of their fellow-tribesmen filled them with the same delight as the favour of popes and princes

and the praise of the whole civilized world could give to the great Italian masters." *

"On Chasm Island, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, is a cave in which figures have been drawn with black and red colours on the white rock—kangaroos, tortoises, a hand, then a kangaroo, followed by thirty-two men, the third of whom carries a kind of a sword, and is twice as large as the others." † "Likewise a rock on Clack's Island on the northeast coast was first primed with red ochre, after which fairly good sharks, tortoises, trepangs, starfish, clubs, canoes, kangaroos, dogs, etc., were painted with white earth, more than a hundred and fifty figures." ‡ On the peninsula of Cape York "Norman Taylor found a smooth rock wall, on which numerous figures were drawn in outlines of red ochre and filled out with white. A similar figure in outline of a man was further spotted with yellow. On the hard slabs along the shore were the incised outlines of a few well-drawn tortoises, which reminded him of the sculptured rocks at Bondi, near Sydney, where men, sharks, and fishes are cut in the smooth sandstone." # The rock drawings at Sydney, which are mentioned here, probably resemble the sculptures in the neighbourhood of Port Jackson, for the examination and description of which we are indebted to Angas. "When we examined the flat rocks in every direction," says Angas, "we found enough examples of these curious outlines to con-

* Stokes, Discoveries in Australia, vol. ii, p. 170.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 760. Flinders's Voyage to Terra Australis, vol. ii, p. 158.

‡ Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 760. King, Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia, vol. ii, p. 25.

Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 292.

firm us in the opinion that they were executed by natives; at what time is, however, quite uncertain. From the half-obliterated condition in which many of these are found (although the lines are cut nearly an inch deep in the hard rocks), and from the circumstance that we had to remove earth and shrubbery of considerable age from several of the figures, it follows that they were executed a very long time ago. At first we could not bring ourselves to believe that these sculptures were the work of savages, and we supposed that the figure of the kangaroo, the first that was found, was of European origin; but when we extended our investigations further and found that the farthest and most inaccessible shore rocks were adorned with similar sculptures, all of which represented truly indigenous objects—such as kangaroos, opossums, sharks, shields, the boomerang, and, most of all, human figures in the positions of the *corroborry* dance—no other conclusion was left us than that they were the work of aborigines. Europeans, if they had undertaken so laborious and protracted a work, would have drawn ships, horses, and men with hats. An old writer on New South Wales remarked, about 1803, of the aborigines: "They have a taste for sculpture; most of their implements are decorated with rude carvings which they make with pieces of shell, and on the rocks may be seen various figures of fishes, birds, swords, animals, etc., which are not badly represented. . . . Some figures of fishes are twenty-five feet long, and it is noteworthy that the shield in the picture corresponds exactly with that which the aborigines of Port Stephen still carry. We found similar works at Lane Cove, Port Aiken, and Port Piper. When I visited the last place I thought

that such sculptures as those on the cliff might possibly be found on the flat rocks at the end of the park belonging to the estate, and after a careful search I found a considerable number, which were still in fairly good condition." * "Philipp saw everywhere at Botany Bay and Port Jackson, as well as in the interior, figures of animals (fishes, birds, lizards, the last quite large), of shields, weapons, men, and similar objects, rude but plainly and rather well drawn, engraved in the rocks. A dancing man cut on a rock wall at the top of a hill was particularly good." †

The examples cited are sufficient to indicate the extent and the character of the Australian rock carvings. While the works of this kind correspond to the fresco paintings and reliefs of European ornaments, our canvas paintings also have their analogies in Australia in the drawings which the aborigines make on soot-blackened pieces of hide. These sketches, which are scratched with the aid of a sharp stone or a tooth or simply with the finger nail, are without doubt the highest achievements of Australian pictorial art, and it is much to be regretted that they have not been collected and published in greater numbers. While the rock paintings and sculptures are mostly limited to the representation of single figures, the hide drawings display large associated groups of men and animals with the landscapes around them. Brough Smyth has published a remarkably characteristic work of this kind. The hide on which it appears constituted originally a part of the roof of a hut which a native had built on Lake Tyrrell.

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* Angas: Wood. Natural History of Man, vol. ii, p. 95.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 759.

The man was not unacquainted with the customs of the whites, "but had received no guidance from them." The figures are drawn with the finger nail on the soot-blackened hide. In the lower part of the picture is seen first a pond surrounded by low trees. On the right of this rises the stone house of a European settler. Immediately above this is a group of natives dancing the *corroborry;* on the left sit the singing and time-beating women; by their side are several spectators. Farther up are individual groups separated from one another by division lines. On the left in a circle are two men armed with hatchets approaching a snake. In the centre is a native in his canoe pursuing a water bird. On the right is a pond fringed with bushes on which two birds are swimming. On the other side of this pond rises a group of trees under which a native stands with a gun in his arms. By his side squats another smoking a pipe. Near the two lie weapons and implements. Above them a plain dotted with scattered trees extends to the upper end of the picture, which is enlivened with all sorts of animals. The trees and animals are excellently well drawn. The tall eucalyptus on the left, whose trunk a native is climbing with the aid of his hatchet; the squatting kangaroo; the emus, the turkeys; a snake raising itself up—all are delineated with surprising accuracy. The waving line that incloses the whole is probably intended for a river. The execution of the entire picture is rude enough, and yet every line betrays an artistic talent which nobody would have looked for on Lake Tyrrell.

Quite as admirable as this hide picture are the pencil-and-pen sketches of a native from the upper Murray which Brough Smyth has reproduced in his second

volume. We should not conclude from the European materials, which the artist had obtained from a settler, that he had enjoyed a European training. He was rather an "untaught aboriginal lad." The sketches were made very rapidly, without model, and of his own suggestion. A war dance is represented on the upper part of the first sheet. The dancers, brandishing shields, clubs, and boomerangs, are in the characteristic attitude of jumping. Below them is seen the ordinary *corroborry;* to the left the dancers decorated with bunches of leaves; to the right, on a small elevation, the woman orchestra in full activity, overtopped by a tree, on the crown of which a bird is sitting. Two hunting scenes occupy the lower portion of the picture. A native in his little canoe is aiming with his spear at a fish. Three hunters who have covered themselves with herbage are creeping up toward four emus. The group of three hunters deserves special attention, for it exhibits the single effort at perspective drawing which we have been able to discover in Australian art. The principal group of the second sheet is again a *corroborry*, which an excellently characterized pair of Europeans are witnessing. Above it lies the farm and two houses with peaked roofs and smoking chimneys. The rest of the sheet is filled with hunting scenes: a native who is running with uplifted hatchet after an iguana; another in a canoe spearing a fish; a third, likewise in a canoe, grappling for a tortoise; and a fourth threat-

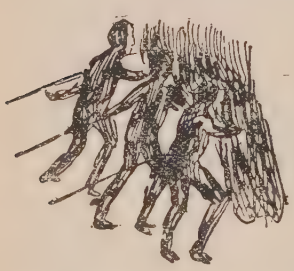

FIG. 24.—AUSTRALIAN DRAWING. (After Brough Smyth.)

ening a pair of emus with his javelin. Most of the figures are silhouettes, the outlines being filled in with an even black, but nevertheless are full of expression and life. Another sketch which is given by Brough Smyth is quite as fresh in design but more carefully carried out. The groups of farmers which it represents attest a marked gift of observation, and besides, as Brough Smyth suggests, a strong sense of humour. The designer was a native youth.* Sometimes the designs are engraved on a stick with a piece of shell or with a tooth in the same way as the ornaments on shields and clubs. Brough Smyth has illustrated these marks, too, by a good example. It is a grave tablet which a native of the Yarra tribe made for a deceased friend. The figures are remarkably neat and plainly cut into the wood, and the animals especially are not inferior to those previously described. "The artist is now dead, and it is therefore impossible to explain the picture. His tribesmen do not know the meaning of the individual figures, but they think that the five men at the top are friends of the deceased who are inquiring into

Fig. 25. — Australian Grave Tablet of Bark. (After Brough Smyth.)

* Brough Smyth, vol. ii, p. 258.

the cause of his death, that the figures of animals indicate that the deceased did not die from want of food, and that the curious figures at the lower end are *mooroops*, or spirits, which have brought about the death by malicious sorcery." * Similar pictures were found in the huts of the exterminated Tasmanians. "In the Western Mountains," says Calder, "huts were found which were decorated with rude charcoal pictures. The first represented a kangaroo of unnatural form, the fore legs of which were twice as long as the hind legs; another was intended for an emu; a third showed an animal which might be taken at will for a dog, a horse, or a crocodile. But the master work was a battle piece—a conflict between natives, with men fighting and persons falling." †

Let us try to extract and combine from these single sketches the general characteristic traits of Australian pictorial art. The pictures of the Australians are, for the most part, drawings, and only the smallest part of them are polychrome paintings. The Australians do not use any different colours in their painting from those they employ in their ornamentation—red, yellow, and white—all three mostly of mineral origin; a black of charcoal; and a blue the nature of which is not known. These pigments are applied with fat, and then, as has been determined in the caves at Glenelg, are covered with a pitchy insoluble gum.‡ No signs of shading have been discovered in the paintings.

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* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 289.

† Calder, Native Tribes of Tasmania. Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. iii, p. 21.

‡ "The aborigines procured a red colouring matter either from weathered rocks where it is found as a clay or by the burning of trap

The pictures are engraved or scratched on stone or wood, or are drawn in one colour on a primed or unprimed rock wall. As a rule, the artists are satisfied with marking the outlines of the figures, which are then generally filled in with an even tone. In these outline drawings the profile is decidedly preferred, but is not used exclusively. Only one group suggests an effort at a perspective arrangement, and even this faint indication is perhaps only accidental. It may be assumed as certain that both linear and aërial perspective are foreign to Australian pictorial art in general. Like the ancient Egyptians, the Australian places things which really stand one behind the other, one over the other. The subjects of Australian pictorial work are partly single figures that have no relation to one another, and partly connected groups, often rich in figures. Both the single figures and the groups, with few exceptions, belong to the usual circle of experience of the aborigines. It should be said with emphasis that "the unbridled fancy" which is so frequently ascribed to savages never appears in the Australian pictures. They reveal rather a want than an excess of fancy. The form of these pictures is as soberly naturalistic as their substance; the artist endeavours to

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or porphyry. Yellow clay and yellow ochre are not abundant and are wanting in many districts. White clay is found everywhere in the region of the granite and the paleozoic formations. In the tertiary regions, where white clay does not occur on the surface, the aborigines burned a very good colouring material out of gypsum and selenite. A black colour was obtained from charcoal or soot." Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 294. "Yellow is also obtained from the interior of the nests of certain ants which collect yellow dust, and from a fucus. Some other plant juices are used for colours—for example, to colour red." Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 761.

repeat the natural forms and movements in the most characteristic manner possible; and he has with his rude tools reached a degree of success in this which the most cultivated Europeans, with abundant appliances, are never able to attain.

This pictorial talent does not appear in individual Australians alone, but seems to be almost a common property of the aboriginal population. "Many of the young people," says Chauncey, "are capable of delineating objects. On the Murray, where they usually cover their huts with hides, the young men very often amuse themselves by scratching or drawing with charcoal various figures and scenes on the inner sides of the skins. Many of the young people have a talent for drawing, and sketch with great rapidity." * Albert Le Souëff likewise avers that "the aborigines in general possess considerable capacity for carving and drawing." † There are evidently great differences in this capacity, as a glance at our examples shows. There are good and bad draughtsmen, even in Australia; but, as a whole, the talent for drawing seems to be more generally diffused than in Europe.

As to the Australians, so has the most insignificant knowledge and capacity for pictorial art been denied by critics to the "half-brute" Bushmen; and like the Australians, the "half-brute" Bushmen, too, possess, despite these denials, a gift for observation and representation such as are sometimes not found in the sharp-sighted anthropologists who discover everywhere resemblances to monkeys.

The rock sculptures and paintings of the Bushmen

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* Brough Smyth, vol. ii, p. 258. † Ibid., vol. ii, p. 299.

are so numerous in South Africa that the investigating traveller can not easily overlook them. Fritsch found upon flat stones, on a hill not far from Hopetown, "thousands of figures of various animals, often twenty or more on one block."* "The area of distribution of such figures," he says, "is very great, and extends from the immediate vicinity of the Cape, where there are still remains of them at Tulbagh Kloof, through the whole colony and across the Orange River." Mark Hutchinson found in the Drachenberg the walls of caves in which Bushmen had lived wholly covered with such paintings; and Hübner saw at "Gestoppte Fontein," in the Transvaal, between two and three hundred figures engraved on soft slate.†

The technical style of these South African pictures agrees perfectly with that which we have learned to know in Australia. The figures are either scratched on a dark rock with a harder stone, so that they appear on the ground in lighter colours, or are painted in colours on a light-hued rock, and with the same limited provision of earth colours as that of the Australians—bright red, brown ochre, yellow, and black. A green also occurs sometimes. The colours are mixed with fat or blood, and laid on with the assistance of a feather.‡ The subjects represented by the Bushmen are taken from the same source in which the Australian finds his—from his everyday surroundings. Fritsch says, however, that "the artists appear sometimes to give their fancy free play"; but the only example he adduces hardly bears witness to any special strength of

* Fritsch, Eingeborene Süd-Afrikas, p. 426.

† Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 464; Zeitschr. für Ethnol., vol. iii, p. 51.

‡ Wood, vol. i, p. 298.

this artistic fancy—"a naked human figure with red zigzag lines on its loins and something like a folded umbrella in its hand, on a rock at Keypoort, which could not well be interpreted."* The Bushman generally represents only such things as he has seen and which

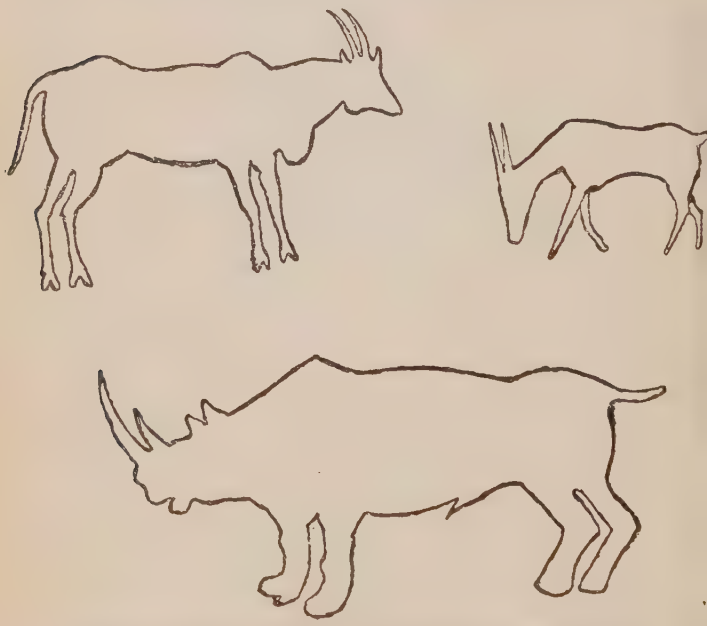

FIG. 26.—ROCK DRAWINGS OF THE BUSHMEN. (After Fritsch.)

immediately interest him—animals and men. Nothing else could be expected than that the plants should be neglected by so specifically a hunting people. In compensation for that the higher fauna of South Africa is exceedingly well represented—the elephant, the rhi-

* Fritsch, p. 426.

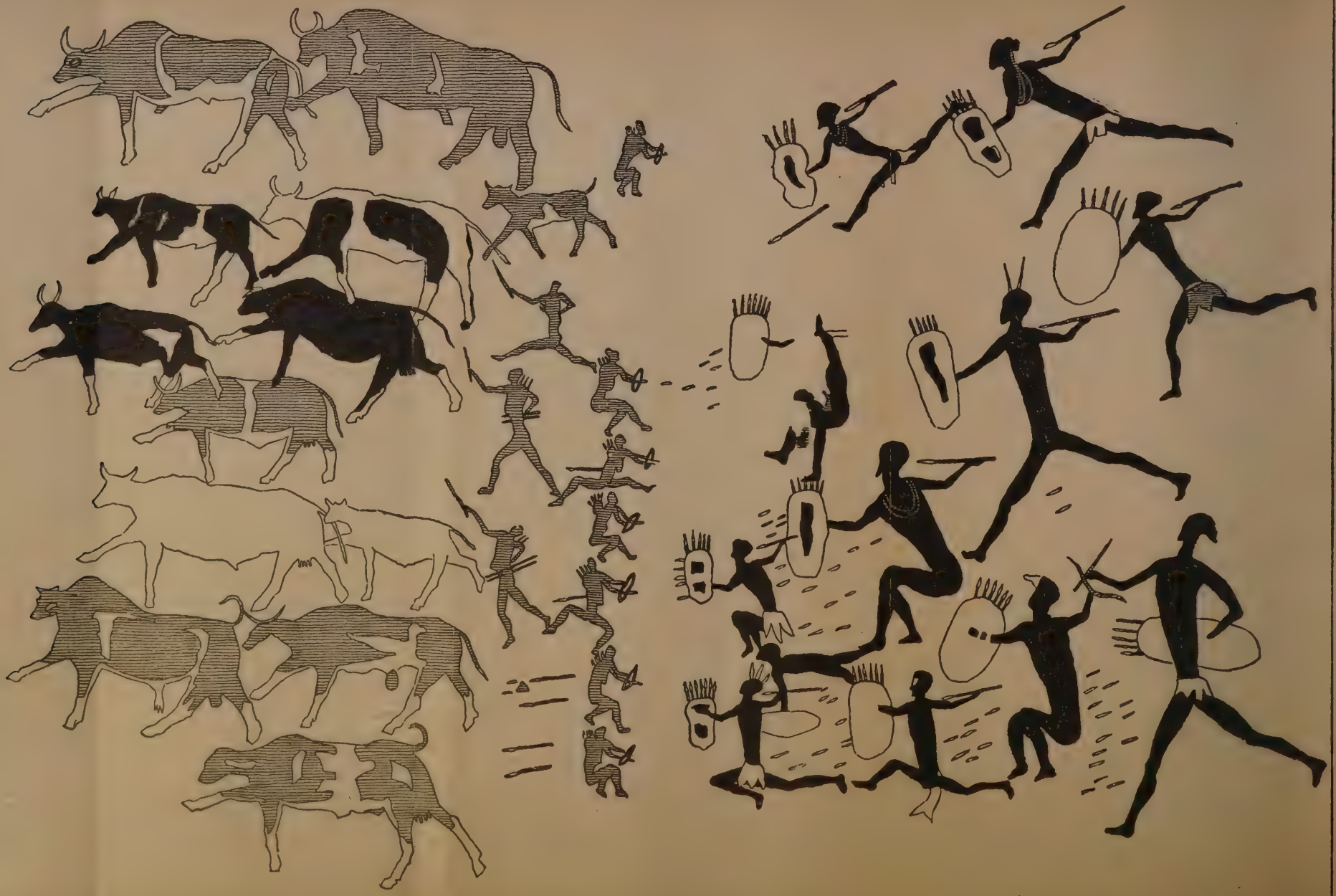

PLATE III.—A CAVE PAINTING OF THE BUSHMEN. (After Andrée.)

noceros, the giraffe, the eland, the buffalo, the various kinds of antelope, the ostrich, the hyena, the apes, and, besides wild animals, the larger domesticated beasts, dogs, cattle, and horses. Among them appear equally unmistakable the human types of South Africa: the little Bushman with his bow, the large Kaffir with his assegai, and the Boer with his broad-brimmed hat and his terrible gun. Most of these figures stand without relation to one another; but in particular cases the Bushman has ventured, like the Australian, on larger compositions. The most remarkable example of this kind which has come under our notice is the picture of a battle between Bushmen and Kaffirs which Andree has copied from a communication to the *Société des Missions Évangéliques* of Paris. The original painting is in a cave two kilometres from the mission station of Hermon. A horde of Bushmen who have stolen a herd of cattle is pursued by the plundered Kaffirs. While some of the robbers hurriedly drive the cattle onward, the larger number turn with their bows toward the enemy, who are rushing forward, armed with spears and shields. "Remarkable," says Andree, "is the exaggeration of the difference in size between the little Bushmen and the large Kaffirs, through which the artist perhaps sought to express the heroism of the fact that those little people dared to oppose the gigantic, muscular Kaffirs."* The pictorial works of the Bushmen display the same excellences that have been remarked in the primitive drawings of the Australians; the wonderfully sharp comprehension and accurate representation of natural forms and movements. "The

* Andree, Ethnographische Parallelen, new series, p. 67.

characteristic features of the several species were so distinctly stamped," says Büttner, "that we were never in doubt as to the meaning of a figure even where the influence of the weather had allowed little of it to remain."* The first feature of that battle picture that strikes the eye is the extraordinary truthfulness and vivacity with which the motions of the men and animals are reproduced, such as have only been brought so sharply to our comprehension by means of instantaneous photography. In other respects this remarkable painting suffers from the same lack of perspective that we have found prevailing in Australian art. There is, however, an exception here. At least the better draughtsmen among the Bushmen are acquainted with the elementary principles of perspective. "It is remarkable," writes Büttner, "that the figures in the several groups which are to be regarded as farther away are drawn considerably smaller"; and he afterward mentions the picture of a chase of springbok "in which it could be clearly perceived that the hunters, ranged in a wide circle, were driving the game in from every side. The perspective reduction mentioned above was seen in this picture also, and both hunters and springbok in the distance were delineated on a smaller scale."† Hutchinson avers, likewise: "Perspective and foreshortening are correctly reproduced. A drawing of a rear view of an ox or eland is so remarkable for this trait that it might be regarded as a study or demonstration for the purpose of instruction." ‡

* Zeitschr. für Ethnol., vol. x, p. (17). † Ibid., vol. x, p. (17).

‡ Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 464. Baines, however, asserts exactly the contrary. "The Bushman knows nothing of perspective, and has not the slightest idea of foreshortening a horn or a

The characterization which we have given of the pictorial art of the Australians and Bushmen applies almost word for word to the drawings of the northern tribes of hunting peoples. All the tribes that live in the extreme north of America and Asia—the Tchuktchis, the Aleuts, and the Eskimo—are very fond of drawing; and there is hardly an ethnographical museum in which a few of their artistic productions can not be seen. The dimensions of the pictures are, however, very modest. The monumental rock paintings of Australia and South Africa are not to be found in the north. The hyperborean artist scratches his figures in miniature on a walrus' tooth, or he paints it with red ochre and charcoal, which he has mixed with oil, on a piece of walrus hide.* In other respects his representations have the same naturalistic character which the drawings of the Bushmen possess in common with those of the Australians.

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limb so as to conceal it behind another as it appears to the eye." But he has evidently, as also appears undoubtedly from his description, only seen bungling pieces, such as are mentioned by other travellers in addition to better works. The painting which Wood, who agrees with Baines' judgment, has copied is a bungling piece of this kind, wholly unfit to give a conception of the capacity of the Bushman to make pictures.

* "The drawings of the Eskimo are put upon slightly curved pieces of walrus ivory and on bows, the strings of which are used to set in motion the borer with which fire is produced." Hildebrand, Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Kunst der niëderen Naturvölker; Nordenskiold, Studien und Forschungen, p. 313. See there, on the plate, p. 320, the figure of a piece of walrus hide with drawings of the Tchucktchis. The other Tchuktchi drawings which Hildebrand figures were made with pencil or red ochre on paper for the Vega Expedition. Choris (Voyage pittoresque autour du Monde) figures the wooden cap-visor of an Aleut having upon it the representation of a seal and whale hunt.

FIG. 27.—CARVING BY AN ESKIMO ON A PIECE OF WALRUS TUSK.

The hyperboreans also take special pleasure in copying figures and scenes which are brought before them in their daily life. On the carved walrus tusks of the Eskimo may be seen the round snow huts and the skin-covered summer tents; bears and walruses, at which the hunter aims his harpoon; men who are paddling in boats of hide to the land, on which others are gliding along in dog sledges. In the drawings of the Tchuktchis, besides scenes like these, the familiar reindeer are most prominent; and the Aleuts adorn the visors of their curious caps with figures of *kayak* men on the hunt for whales and fish. Fanciful creatures are of rare occurrence. Only one being, that does not belong to the real world, is found in the considerable number of Tchuktchi drawings which Hildebrand has reproduced: it is the man in the moon, in the shape of a manikin dressed in the Tchuktchi style, with a large head standing in the middle of a very imperfect circle.* The same supernatural being appears in an interesting drawing of an Eskimo which Boas has annexed to his translation of the Saga of Qandjaqdjuq.† In this picture, however, the man in the moon is not distinguish-

* Hildebrand, Beiträge, p. 311, Fig. 6.

† Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1884–'85; Boas, The Central Eskimo, pp. 631, 632.

able from an ordinary Eskimo. The delineatory style of the hyperboreans does not differ in any essential respect from that of the two peoples already mentioned. The observance of perspective is as lacking in all their pictures as in those of the Australians. Yet single drawings manifest an unmistakable advance in this direction.* On the other side, the excellences are the same. The several figures and groups of the hyperboreans are reproduced with the same absolute truth to

FIG. 28.—DRAWING BY A TCHUKCHI. (After Hildebrand.)

Nature in form and motion that has excited our admiration in the pictures of the Australians and Bushmen.

While the hyperboreans do not excel their culture fellows as draughtsmen, they have developed another branch of their pictorial art to a height which still remains unattainable to all the other known hunting tribes. Neither the Australians nor the Bushmen have sculpture, but the hyperboreans are famous master carvers; and, in fact, we observe in their figures cut from bone the best achievements of primitive representative art.

These little pieces of sculpture—they are all insignificant in size—represent either men or animals. The

* Compare, for example, Hildebrand, p. 311, Fig. 10, where the more distant reindeer are represented on a plainly reduced scale; but especially Boas, p. 631, Fig. 538.

human figures are generally rather rudely executed, although they are still always sufficiently characterized; but they are certainly much "inferior to the animal

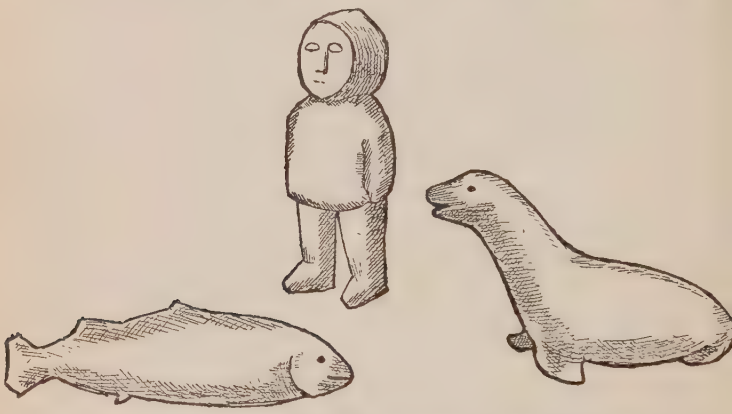

Fig. 29.—Hyperborean Bone Carvings. (After Hildebrand.)

figures." * But the latter are wonderful works. The various cetaceans, walruses, sea-dogs, bears, dogs, foxes, fishes, and birds—in short, all the animals that play any part in the life of the hyperboreans—are so sharply comprehended and so characteristically copied that the carvings might serve the zoölogist as objects of study. As we have said, nothing like them is found among the other hunting peoples of the present time. If we would see primitive sculptures of equal merit we must go back to the reindeer period.† Finally, we may men-

* Yet there are exceptions to this. The University Museum of Ethnology at Freiburg has, for example, a plaster cast of a female *torso*, which might be taken for a sketch by a European sculptor.

† Pictures of such carvings may be found in Hildebrand, pp. 324–334, and Boas, Plates VIII and IX.

tion here the remarkable masks of the Eskimo, though they can hardly be regarded as primitive works. Contrary to the case of bone carvings, the masks are not the common possessions of the Eskimo, and still less of the hyperboreans; but their distribution is limited at this time to the tribes inhabiting the peninsula of Alaska. It is therefore highly probable that the masks, as well as the peculiar dances in which they are worn, are not an original property of the Eskimo, but have been borrowed from the Indians of the northwest coast, who have developed the use of masks in an extraordinarily rich and original way.* Yet the masks are not without value as helps to the appreciation of the pictorial talent of the Eskimo. Even the most hasty glance must show the profound difference that exists between them and the really primitive drawings and figures in bone. While the last, like the primitive pictorial works of the Australians and Bushmen, ex-

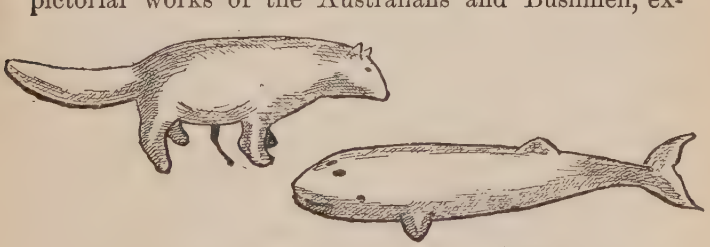

FIG. 30.—ALEUT CARVINGS ON BONES. (After Hildebrand.)

hibit throughout a sober naturalistic character, the masks for the most part simulate the productions of an unbridled fancy; and, most significantly, are especially fanciful among the southern tribes, who dwell in

* Compare Andree, Ethnographische Parallelen, new series, p. 155.

the immediate neighbourhood of the Northwestern Indians.* When we consider the rich collection which Jacobsen obtained for the Berlin Völker-Museum and Bastian has published in the new series of his Amerikas Nordwestküste, we might believe we were looking at the caricatures of a wild fever-dream. The naturalistic basis of primitive pictorial art is, however, still apparent in them. The numerous masks representing animals are at least as lifelike as the best bone figures; and in some of the human faces the characteristic features of the Eskimo can be studied as well as in the living originals.† But most of the animals, and especially the human figures, are unnaturally distorted—horrible demoniac faces with grinning teeth in wide-open, blood-stained mouths, one with gaping red wounds in the forehead, another with one frightful staring eye, while a grinning head rises out of the socket of the other. Very often the animal and human forms may be seen most strangely amalgamated. One mask represents a puffin, another an otter—both perfectly true to Nature—as far as the back, from which a devil's face looks out.‡ One demon's head is furnished with six hands; two wings grow out of a second. There are pictures that remind us of the creatures of the primitive chaos of

* In the masks of the most northern part of Alaska "the grotesque element, which is so abundantly prominent in Bristol Bay and in the delta of the Kuskoquim and the Yukon, is, judging from the collected specimens, almost wholly wanting." Dall, Masks and Labrets. Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, p. 122.

† Compare Bastian Grünwedel, Amerikas Nordwestküste, new series, Plate I, Fig. 7; Plate V, Figs. 19, 20.

‡ Compare Amerikas Nordwestküste, new series, Plate I, Fig. 3; Plate III, Fig. 5. Such combinations are well-known characteristics of Indian pictorial art.

Lucretius. Sometimes a whole proceeding is symbolically represented in one of these composite masks, as in the Shamanic mask *aman guak*, which is used for the ceremony of "enticing the fishes, especially the salmon, and the seals into the river to be caught." The figures on the mask are intended to bring the subject spirits of the Shaman before the eyes. The mask consists of a face painted gray and white, with two hands by the side of it, two Shaman's wands over the face, and

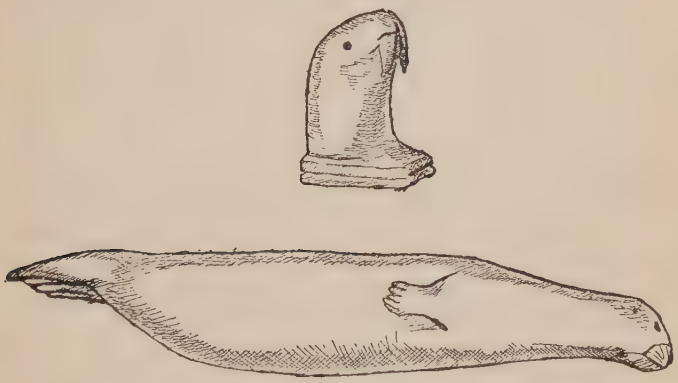

FIG. 31.—BONE CARVINGS OF THE ESKIMO. (After Boas.)

a seal between them. On the right and left beneath the face are two square holes, and under these a red hollow ball with several holes representing the mouths of the river, into which the salmon, which are likewise symbolically represented, are driven by the power of the Shaman.* These complex figures are evidently no primitive works. If we have nevertheless considered them somewhat closely, it has been because they show

* Amerikas Nordwestküste, new series, Plate I, Fig. 2.

of what achievements the artistic talent of a hunting people is capable under favourable conditions. The dance masks of the Aleuts, which have now, through the efforts of the missionaries, almost wholly disappeared, seem to have been no more primitive. We only know that they mostly represented sea animals, and covered their wearer to the shoulders. The masks which these people were accustomed to put on the dead in the grave have at least in part come down to us, and Dall has collected a number of remains of them. "The masks were all made after one type, although they differed from one another in details. They were on the average fourteen English inches in height and—including the curvature—from ten to twelve inches in breadth. All had a broad and thick but not flattened nose; straight, flat eyebrows; thin lips and a large mouth, in which small wooden teeth were inserted. They were all painted with various colours, most of them black and red; bore tufts of hair fastened with pegs, which represented the beard and hair along the upper border of the forehead; were pierced only in the nostrils and the mouth; and had broad, flat ears, which were placed, unnaturally high, on the upper hinder corners of the mask. Numerous curves of different kinds were scratched or painted on the cheeks. These masks reveal great skill in the carver's art, especially when it is considered that they were executed with tools of stone and bone." *

* Dall, *loc. cit.*, pp. 140, 141. Illustrated in Plates XXVIII and XXIX. There is also a picture of a dance mask there—from Sauer's report of Billings's Journey—that plainly shows the Aleut physiognomy, which most strangely, as Dall justly remarks, never appears on the corpse masks. The latter are rather of the Indian type.

The talent for pictorial representation is thus widely diffused among the hunting peoples. Yet it is not universal. There are at least three peoples to whom representative art seems wholly foreign. Nothing has thus far been discovered among the wretched Fuegians or the Botocudo to indicate the existence of a gift of this kind; and Man, who knows them best, says expressly of the people of the Andaman Islands, that "in their wild condition they never make an effort to represent any object, and apparently have no idea of drawing." *

Before endeavouring to explain the primitive pictorial works which we have been considering, let us summarize the characteristic traits that are common to them. Primitive representative art is decidedly naturalistic in material and form. With few exceptions, it selects its objects from its usual natural and cultural surroundings, and it seeks to represent this as naturally as it can with its limited means. Its materials are scanty; the perspective, even in its best works, is very deficient. But it, nevertheless, succeeds in giving its rude figures a truthfulness to life which is missed in the carefully elaborated designs of many higher peoples. The chief peculiarity of primitive pictorial art lies just in this union of truth to life and rudeness. It is therefore more surprising than accurate that the drawings of the primitive peoples are always and again put on a par with those of children; for not a trace of the sharp observation which is always unmistakably prominent in the pictures of the hunting peoples can be discovered in the unaided scrawls of the most earnest children. The art works with which our children decorate tables

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 115.

and walls are much more symbolical than naturalistic. The only real similarity between the art of children and the art of primitive peoples is that the latter seem to know as little of perspective as the former. The drawings of children and those of savages are usually regarded as caricatures; and this view is usually as false in one case as in the other. When a child or an Australian exaggerates any part of the body or of the dress in a picture, it means, if it is done not from want of skill but designedly, primarily nothing more than that that feature, for some reason, seemed to the artist especially worthy of notice. Children and savages really have a strong inclination toward satire; and it is therefore safe to suppose that caricatures, too, will be found among the productions of primitive pictorial representation. But it is not easy to pick them out, and it is well to declare only those primitive designs to be caricatures the satirical intent of which is expressly manifest. We have ourselves followed this principle, and have therefore ventured to designate only one primitive pictorial work as a caricature.

We have said that ethnology is able to cast light upon the darkness that covers the origin of the French reindeer etchings. Yet the problem is not solved, but only enlarged by what we have so far advanced. We have seen that these prehistoric representations are in no sense a solitary phenomenon, but that quite similar works are still produced in great numbers by some of the rudest peoples of the present time. Yet the artistic productions of the present Australians, Bushmen, and hyperboreans are not less problematical to us than the works of the unknown men of the reindeer period. Very little is gained toward the comprehension of a

phenomenon by the proof of the extent of its diffusion, unless that is accompanied by the possibility of demonstrating the basis of it. It is a question whether we can discover the conditions that made so high artistic achievements possible in so low a grade of culture. The art works of primitive peoples have been described often, but they have never thus far been accounted for. It is, nevertheless, probable that learned ingenuity has overlooked the explanation, while it lies quite near. What, besides the materials, are the requisites for the execution of such pictorial works as we have observed among the hunting peoples? Two qualities are primarily requisite: first, capacity for keen comprehension and a correct impression of the original; and, secondly, a corresponding perfection of the motor and sensorial apparatus that come into play in pictorial work. Can we assume that both these properties are present in these peoples? They must be present, or the peoples themselves would be no longer in existence. Australians, Bushmen, and hyperboreans would long ago have perished in the struggle for existence if they had not improved eye and hand, their best and most indispensable weapons, to higher efficiency. Nature has directed them to the product of the chase for the largest part of their subsistence. But their prey would be very scanty, even in the richest hunting grounds, without that nameless gift of perception and observation by means of which the primitive hunter acquires an exact knowledge of the nature and habits of the several wild species. "The vision of the Australians," says Collins,* "is extraordinarily good, and their existence in fact depends

* Collins, Northwest and Western Australia, vol. i, p. 315.

often enough on the sharpness of their eye." The Australian hunter can follow the trail of a kangaroo all day through thicket and grass; he can, without fail, find the claw marks of an opossum on the bark of a eucalyptus tree, when they are hardly visible to a European, and further can tell, almost at the first glance, whether they are fresh or old, and whether the animal climbed up or down. "The memory of the Australian for sense impressions is really astonishing. Stuart relates that he was recognised again after fourteen years by aborigines who had previously seen him for only one or two hours, and other travellers mention similar experiences." * Fritsch boasts of the Bushmen that "they surpass all the other South Africans in the sharpness of their senses. Most surprising to me," he says, "were the feats of the Bushmen in tracking. They follow a track at a rapid pace over ground rather thickly covered with vegetation, hardly seeming to give it any attention, and only when it makes a sudden turn or something unusual happens, do they betray, by a gesture, the strict observation which they give to the most inconspicuous objects." † Hardly a polar explorer has failed to speak with admiration of the sharp and active power of observation of the hyperboreans. "They are thoroughly acquainted," says Kane, "with their desolate home. Every change in the weather, the wind, and the ice is remarked, and the influence of the change on the flight of the birds of passage is predicted with the same keen sense with which they watch the habits of the sedentary animals." The hunter, more-

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 736.

† Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrikas, p. 424.

over, needs not his eye alone, but his hand, too. It is not enough that he can track and observe his game; he must know how to bring it down, and for that he requires suitable weapons above all other things. That the hunting peoples have distinguished themselves by a high and adequate development of their weapons is therefore not at all wonderful. They have indeed every reason for cultivating their skill in this direction, for it is with these weapons that they have to struggle for their existence. In fact, the implements of the chase of all the hunting peoples attest a technical skill which appears the greater the poorer the tools which the primitive peoples have to use. To a superficial observer the weapons of the Australians appear indeed exceedingly rude, but the more closely we examine them the more we wonder at the skill with which they are fabricated. The throw-sticks especially are not such very simple works as they seem to be.* The Bushman knows how to construct his ingenious poisoned arrows, to which, surrounded by enemies, he owes his existence with the simplest means. But the highest technical mastery is found where harsh Nature strains the faculties to their extreme tension—among the hyperborean tribes. "When we consider the rude condition of their culture, their northern situation in a country which lies almost constantly covered with snow, and the comparatively miserable materials which they have to work, we receive the impression that they are the equals, at least, of the peoples on the islands of the Pacific Ocean." So Cook declared of the tribes on Prince William Sound,

* Compare on this point the discussion of Australian throw-sticks in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 313.

and so says every student of the hyperborean tribes whose weapons and tools he has examined. When we consider the remarkably neat and carefully finished harpoons, bows, and arrows we can hardly regard it as surprising that the men who made such weapons were able to carve an animal form true to Nature.* Power of observation and skill with the hand are the qualities demanded for primitive naturalistic pictorial art, and the faculty of observation and handiness of execution are at the same time the two indispensable requisites for the primitive hunter life. Primitive pictorial art, with its peculiar characteristics, thus appears fully comprehensible to us as an æsthetic exercise of two faculties which the struggle for existence has developed and improved among the primitive peoples. We learn now, likewise, why pictorial talent is almost universally diffused among primitive peoples. Where every one has to be a good hunter and hand worker, every one may be a passable draughtsman and carver. On the other hand, an equally simple explanation is given of the fact that the talent for naturalistic representation is as rare among the lower farming and herding peoples as it is abundant among the hunters. Fritsch expressly refers to the contrast between the lifelike sketches of the Bushmen and the "stiff, grotesque figures of animals which the Bantu painfully model and carve." This contrast is manifest also, though perhaps nowhere so sharply prominent as in South Africa, between people of the two grades of culture everywhere. High as the agriculturists and herdsmen stand above the hunters in civilization, they

* See the pictures of weapons of the Eskimo in Boas, The Central Eskimo.

are as far beneath them in representative art—an evidence, we remark by the way, that the relation between culture and art is not so simple as some art philosophers believe. To us this apparently abnormal phenomenon is perfectly comprehensible. Neither the agriculturists nor the herdsmen require for their maintenance so high a perfection of the power of observation and of skill with the hand; consequently these faculties deteriorate among them, and with these the talent for naturalistic representation.

The problem of the reindeer carvings is thus substantially solved by ethnology. The much-discussed figures are the work of a primitive people. Their truth to Nature is in fact not any evidence against their high antiquity, but the best evidence in favour of it.

We have called the carvings and drawings of the primitive peoples works of art. It is still to be considered whether they really have a title to that designation, for it is by no means self-evident that these pictorial works owe their origin to an æsthetic need. The Philosophy of Art inclines to another view. One of its oldest and most dogmatic precepts declares that pictorial art has always arisen in the beginning as the servant of religion and that it has only gradually grown into independence. This venerable dogma does not find sufficient support in the facts which we have examined. Grey, it is true, expresses the opinion that the pictures at Glenelg may have some religious significance, but neither he nor any other student has been able to discover the mysterious meaning. Nobody has ever yet sought for such a meaning in the other Australian rock drawings. It is indeed conceivable that a few at least

of these representations may be a kind of religious symbols. The thought of representing the protecting and heraldic animals of the different tribes in such a monumental way may not have been remote from the Australian mind, and many analogies may be called up from Egyptian and Christian art; but so long as this assumption can not be demonstrated—and we have not yet seen the shadow of a demonstration of it—we have no right to say that these figures of animals and men are anything else than they appear to be. We know positively of the pictures on bark that they have no relation to religious ideas and uses.*

The South African rock drawings have no deeper meaning than the Australian. One of the best-informed men concerning the Bushmen—Theophilus Hahn—expressly assures us that "they practise their art purely from a fondness for representing things." † The conditions among the hyperboreans are not so clear. It will not readily occur to anybody who has seen their drawings to doubt their secular character. The sculptures, on the other hand, have at least partly a religious import. Cranz says that "the Greenlanders attach to the kayak a small model of it with the figure of a man, so that it shall not cant." ‡ Hildebrand remarks of the carvings of the Tchuktchis that "some of

* The Australian drawings which seem to have a religious meaning—the figures on the supposed magic sticks, for example—exhibit a quite different character. They are unintelligible combinations of lines which sometimes suggest the ornaments on the shields and throw-sticks, but are as different as possible from the naturalistic representations of the rock and drawings on bark. Compare, for example, the picture in Ratzel, vol. ii, p. 91.

† Zeitsch. für Ethnol., 1879; Verh. der Anth. Ges., p. (307).

‡ Cranz, Historie von Grönland, 1765, p. 276.

them at least served as amulets and thereby testified to the mysterious connection which was supposed to exist between the destiny of animals and of men."* Jacobsen mentions models of bows, kayaks, reindeer, and whales which were laid on graves by the Eskimo on the southwest coast of Alaska "as evidence that the deceased who was commemorated there had perished in the walrus, seal, or reindeer hunt." In the same region monuments for the dead are found "which consist of rudely worked and partly clad figures." Finally, Jacobsen says that many of the young girls "wear a wooden idol fastened into the hood of their dress of furs."† Yet on the one side all these observations cover only one part, and, as it seems, a small part, of the sculptures; on the contrary, other accounts indicate indubitably that the figures as a rule have no religious significance. When the Philosophy of Art appeals finally to the Shaman masks of the southwestern Eskimo it forgets that they are in no sense primitive works.

Thus representative art as a rule arises in the lowest stage of culture independent of religion. Still, while it is not proved that the pictures of primitive peoples are religious, it has also not been shown that they are æsthetic.

An interpretation has often been sought of these drawings on rocks, wood, and bones that would make them a picture writing. In a certain sense every pictorial representation is a writing, for every picture stands for an event or a fact. In this widest sense the Aus-

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* Hildebrand, Beiträge, p. 323.

† Jacobsen, Reise an der Nordwest Küste Amerikas, p. 334.

tralian pictures representing a *corroborry*, and the South African cave painting which describes a combat between Bushmen and Kaffirs, are certainly writings; but so also in this sense are Raphael's frescoes. A picture does not, however, become a writing in the proper sense until the pictorial representation is no longer an object in itself, but is only a means to express some significance. Impression is the essential purpose of the picture; expression, that of writing. But when the figures are intended only as a means of expression they are no longer required to be true to Nature and carefully elaborated. It is enough if they are recognizable in a general way. In fact, we can distinguish a picture writing from a picture at first glance by the schematic and conventional method in which the figures are treated. We do not find this characteristic mark of pictography in the pictures of the Australians and Bushmen. On the contrary, every trace proves that the artists intended nothing more and nothing less than the truest and most lifelike possible representation of their models. Hence it happens that the Australians use a wholly different method for their demonstrably written expressions. The marks on their message-sticks* have absolutely nothing in common with their

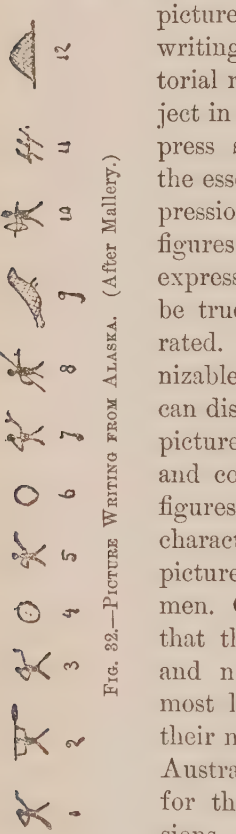

Fig. 32.—Picture Writing from Alaska. (After Mallery.)

* Howitt. On Australian Messengers and Message-sticks. Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xviii.

pictures; they are entirely arbitrarily chosen lines and points. When, on the other hand, we consider the drawings which the hyperboreans engrave on wood and bone, we are struck at once by the characteristic schematizing of the figures on some of the examples, and these pieces are in reality not so much works of art as writings.

Mallery has figured and interpreted a series of such picture writings in his instructive essay, Pictographs of the North American Indians.* These are used on the most various occasions. The specimen which we reproduce here from Mallery, for example, scratched on a wooden tablet and fastened near the house door, is intended to announce that the proprietor of the hut has gone on a long hunt.† In a similar way hunters call upon their fellow-tribesmen for assistance when they are destitute of provisions or are in any other need.

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* Mallery, Pictographs of the North American Indians. Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.

† The original was drawn and interpreted by a native of Alaska, Naumoff, for Dr. Hoffmann in San Francisco. The meaning of the figures, singly, is as follows: 1, The speaker, who points to himself with his right hand, and with his left indicates the direction taken; 2, he holds an oar to show that he has gone by water; 3, the right hand against the head means sleep, and his left hand with one finger extended, one night; 4, a circle with two points in the middle denotes an island with huts; 5, repetition of 1; 6, a circle, means a second island; 7, repetition of 3, but with two extended fingers, meaning two nights; 8, the speaker with a harpoon makes the sign with his left hand for a sea lion; 10, a hunter with arrow and bow; 11, a boat with two rowers; 12, the speaker's lodge. Read in connection, the whole gives the sense: "I am going with my boat that way toward that island, where I shall sleep one night, and shall then go to another island, where I shall stay two nights. I expect to kill a sea lion and then return home." Mallery, pp. 147, 148.

All representations of this kind are undoubtedly picture writings, but these are unmistakably different from the real pictures which we have previously considered. Further than this, picture writing does not appear to be a common possession of the hyperborean tribes. At least the numerous examples which Mallery publishes are all from Alaska and from that part of the Territory in which the Indian influence is so strong that they can not furnish any sure basis for our researches. At any rate there is not the slightest occasion for pronouncing the drawings of the hyperboreans in general, to say nothing of their sculptures, to be picture writing.

We have thus satisfied ourselves that, with comparatively few exceptions, neither a religious nor any other outside purpose can be proved to be intended in the pictorial works of primitive men. We have a full right, therefore, to give credit to the numerous witnesses who assure us that these representations originate from the pure pleasure of making them.

The hunter's life, under the most unfavourable circumstances, affords the leisure required for such purposeless creations; the hyperborean finds it in his icy desert, as well as do the Australian and the Bushman in their subtropical hunting grounds. It is not incumbent on us to give here an explanation of this inclination of primitive man toward pictorial representation; we have fulfilled our purpose in showing that the pleasure of æsthetic creation, together with the faculty of observation and the manual skill of the hunting tribes, account satisfactorily for their artistic achievements.

It is self-evident that these beginnings of repre-

sentative art have to the primitive peoples, through the pleasure they produce, a value that should not be too lightly estimated. There is a question, however, whether they do not, besides, exercise an influence on the social life. In culture of the higher grades pictorial representation has more than once appeared as the æsthetically and practically most efficient art. It was the one which inspired the creation of their palladiums for the Grecian communes and the Italian cities. In antiquity and in the renaissance it, as the queen of the arts, incorporated in marble, bronze, and colours, the religious and social ideas around which the burghers rallied and in sight of which they felt as one people and one community. It may be said that the history of the Grecian and the Italian free cities is the history of their representative art. The survey of graphic and plastic art teaches us, however, that we can, without further knowledge, as little draw conclusions from higher conditions as to lower as the reverse.

There is no point on which the supposition can be based that pictorial art had a meaning to the primitive tribes even approximately like that which it possesses for the more highly civilized societies. How slight the social influence is in the lower grades of civilization is attested by the fact that the cultural character of the hunting peoples which know nothing of it is in no essential respect distinguishable from that of those who experience it. Some picture or another—as, for example, that South African battle piece which preserves to succeeding generations the remembrance of an important tribal event—may in this way contribute to the strengthening of the social bond. Yet, in general, the scope of primitive pictorial art is too limited, its

means are too rude and meagre, for a more profound social effect to be possible. Hence, admirable as its works are in many respects, the essential characteristics of primitive culture would undoubtedly have been the same without primitive pictorial art.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DANCE.

While the significance which pictorial art in lifeless material has acquired among the higher peoples can be discerned, at least in the germ, among the lower tribes, the great social power which the living picture, the dance, once possessed, can hardly be guessed to-day. The modern dance is only a degenerated æsthetical and social remnant; the primitive dance is the most immediate, most perfect, and most efficient expression of the primitive æsthetic feeling.

The characteristic mark of the dance is the rhythmical order of the motions. There is no dance without rhythm. The dances of hunting peoples can be divided, according to their character, into two groups—mimetic and gymnastic dances. The mimetic dances consist of rhythmical imitations of the motions of animals and men, while the movements in gymnastic dances follow no natural model. Both kinds appear side by side among the most primitive tribes.*

* The question might be asked whether the gymnastic dances were not originally mimetic dances. It is certainly possible that in some cases we can not recognise the imitation, because we are not acquainted with the model. On the other side, the most primitive dances of which we know, the love dances of certain species of birds, have no mimetic but a gymnastic character.

Best known are the gymnastic dances of the Australians, the *corroborries*,* which have been described in nearly every account of Australian travel, for they are known over the whole continent. The *corroborries* are always performed at night, and generally by moonlight. We do not, however, consider it necessary, for that reason, to regard them as religious ceremonies. Moonlight nights are chosen probably not because they are holy, but because they are clear. The dancers are usually men, while women form the orchestra. Frequently several tribes join in a great dancing festival; four hundred participants have occasionally been counted in Victoria.† The largest and most noteworthy festivals apparently take place on the conclusion of a peace; ‡ moreover, all the more important events of Australian life are celebrated by dances—the ripening of a fruit, the beginning of the oyster dredging, the initiation of the youth, a meeting with a friendly tribe, the march to battle, a successful hunt. The *corroborries* of different occasions and of different tribes are so like one another that the observer is acquainted with them all when he has seen one. Let us suppose ourselves attending one described by Thomas in the colony of Victoria.# The scene is a clearing in the bush. In the middle of it blazes a large fire, the ruddy glare of which is mingled with the bluish light of the full moon. The dancers are not yet visible; they have retired into the dark shrubbery to put on their festal decorations. On one side of the fire are assembled the women who are to

* Occasionally mimic dances have been called *corroborries*, but as a rule, the name is used only for gymnastic dances.

† Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 175. ‡ Lumholtz, p. 286.

According to Brough Smyth, vol. i, pp. 167, 168.

form the orchestra. All at once a crackling and rustling are heard, and the dancers appear. The thirty men who have entered within the circle of the firelight have all painted, with white earth, rings around the eyes and long streaks on the body and limbs. They wear, besides, tufts of leaves on their ankles and an apron of hide around their loins. Meanwhile the women have arranged themselves, facing one another, into a horse-shoe-shaped group. They are entirely naked. Each holds on her knees a neatly folded and tightly stretched opossum skin, which serves at other times as a robe. Between them and the fire stands the director. He wears the usual apron of opossum skin, and holds a stick in each hand. The spectators sit or stand around in a large circle. The director casts a searching glance at the dancers, then turns and slowly approaches the women. He strikes his two sticks abruptly together; the dancers have arranged themselves with the rapidity of lightning in a line, and advance; then they halt. A new pause, while the director reviews the line. All is in order, and now at last he gives the signal. He begins by beating the time with his two sticks; the dancers fall in with the movement; the women sing and beat on the opossum hides, and the *corroborry* begins. It is astonishing how accurately the time is kept; the tunes and the movements are all in unison. The dancers move as smoothly as the best-trained ballet troupe. They assume all possible positions, sometimes springing aside, sometimes advancing, sometimes retiring one or two steps; they stretch and bend themselves, swing their arms and stamp with their feet. Nor is the director idle. While he is beating the time with his sticks, he continually executes a peculiar nasal song, louder or

more softly by turn, as he makes a step forward or backward. He does not stand in the same place for an instant; now he turns toward the dancers, now toward the women, who then lift up their voices with all their might. The dancers gradually become more excited; the time-sticks are struck faster; the motions become more rapid and vigorous; the dancers shake themselves, spring into the air to an incredible height, and finally utter a shrill cry, as if from one mouth. An instant later, and they have all vanished into the bushes as suddenly as they came out of them. The place remains empty for a while. Then the director gives the signal anew, and the dancers again appear. This time they form a curved line. In other respects the second part is like a continuation of the first one. The women advance, beating and singing at times as loud as if they would split their throats, at other times so softly that their murmuring is hardly audible. The ending is similar to that of the first part; and a third, fourth, and fifth act are performed in a similar style. At one time, however, the dancers form a band four files deep: the first line springs aside; those behind it advance, and in this way the mass moves forward toward the women. The troop looks now like an inextricable tangle of bodies and limbs; and one would think the dancers were about to break one another's skulls with their wildly brandished sticks. But in reality a strict regulation prevails now as in the earlier part of the dance. The excitement is at its height; the dancers cry out, stamp, and jump; the women beat time as if they were crazy, and sing with all the strength of their lungs; the fire, which is blazing up high, scatters a shower of red sparks over the wild scene; and then the director raises

his arms high over his head; a loud clapping breaks through the tumult, and the next instant the dancers are gone. The women and the spectators rise and disperse to their *miams*. A half hour later nothing is stirring in the moonlit clearing except the waning fire. Such is an Australian *corroborry*.

The *corroborry* of the men, as we have said, always offers substantially the same spectacle, but the dance of the women, which is apparently much more rarely introduced, presents a very different character. We owe the best description of the woman's dance to Eyre.* "The dancing women," he says, "clasp their hands over their heads, lock their feet, and press their knees together. Then the legs are thrown outward from the knee—while the feet and hands remain in their original position—and are brought together again so quickly as to give a sharp sound when they strike. This dance is performed either by one girl alone, or by several, at pleasure. Sometimes, too, a woman dances it alone before a file of male dancers in order to excite their passion. In another figure the feet are kept close together on the ground, and the dancers move forward, while describing a small semicircle, by a peculiar wriggling of the body. This dance is almost solely performed by young girls in concert." The *corroborries* of the Tasmanians, so far as can be judged from the scanty accounts we have of them, did not differ from those of the Australians.

The striking resemblance which we have so far remarked at every step between the Australians and the Mincopies extends also to the dance. The dances

* Eyre, vol. ii, pp. 235, 236.

of the Mincopies so resemble those of the Australians that they might be interchangeable with them. The occasions are the same—a visit of friends, the beginning of a season, recovery from illness, and the end of a period of mourning; in short, every event which would excite a joyful feeling in the people. In addition to these, larger festivals are celebrated, to which several tribes resort. On a little clearing in the midst of the thick jungle, says Man, are collected more than a hundred bepainted men and women. The moon pours down its soft light, while out of every hut the ruddy glow of fires casts weird shadows through the scattered groups. On one side sit in a row the women who are to sing in chorus the refrain of the dancing song; on the other side are seen the dusky forms of the spectators, many of whom take part in the performance by clapping their hands in unison. The director, who is likewise the poet and composer of the dance melody, stations himself where he can be seen by all; his foot resting on the narrow end of the sounding-board,* and, supporting his body on a spear or a bow, he beats the time for the singers and dancers, tapping on the sounding-board with the sole or the heel of his other foot. During his solo, which has the character of a recitative, all the other voices are silent, and the spectators remain motionless; but as soon as the sign for the refrain is given, a number of dancers plunge in wild excitement into the arena, and, while performing their parts with passionate energy, the song of the women becomes stronger. The dancer bends his back and throws his

* Concerning the sounding-board of the Mincopies, see Chapter X.

whole weight upon one leg, which is bent at the knee. His hands are extended forward at the height of his breast, the thumb of one being held between the thumb and forefinger of the other, while the other fingers are extended upward. In this position he advances, hopping on one foot and stamping on the ground with the other at every second motion. He thus crosses the whole arena forward and backward, to the time of the sounding-board and the song. When the dancer tires, he indulges himself in a little change by giving the time in a peculiar fashion, bending his knees and raising his heels from the ground exactly according to the measure.* As in Australia, in the Andaman Islands the women do not take part in the dances of men. But they have their own dances, which, according to the accounts of some eyewitnesses, are of rather doubtful propriety. Man's description, however, furnishes nothing remarkable concerning them. He says that the women swing their arms forward and backward, while their knees are bent and moved up and down. Now and then the dancer advances two steps and begins the movements anew.

The Bushmen have so lively a talent for mimicry that we might expect to see it exercised in their dances. Nevertheless, the accounts, which are scanty enough, mention only gymnastic dancers. The most complete description of a Bushman dance is found in Burchell.† The dance took place in the evening in a hut that belonged to the head man, "and there were in it as many persons of both sexes as could sit in a circle and leave

* Man, Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, pp. 390, 391.

† Burchell, Reisen in das Innere von Süd-Afrika. Weimar, 1825, vol. ii, pp. 81 *et seq.*

the dancers standing room. A bright fire was blazing close by the entrance. The dancer was in an ecstasy of vivacity and satisfaction, in which he cared nothing about him and hardly thought of himself. As an adult can hardly stand up, even in the largest hut, the dancer was obliged to support himself on two long sticks, which he held in his hands and which rested on the floor as far apart as was conveniently practicable. Consequently his body was bent forward in an extremely constrained position, and a very awkward one for dancing. On the other hand, his limbs were not restrained by clothing, for he wore nothing but his jackal's skin. In this position he danced without pausing. Sometimes he did not even support himself on the sticks. It was the privilege of each of the company, when his turn came, to take his place and dance as long as he pleased; then another put on the rattle, which is there generally used. This dance is peculiar, and so far as I know there is nothing like it among any other savage tribes on the globe.* One foot was firmly planted, while the other was kept in rapid and irregular motion, but without suffering any notable change of place, although the knee and lower part of the leg moved hither and thither as far as the position permitted. The arms, having to support the body, were only slightly moved. The dancer sang all the while, keeping time with his movements. Sometimes he let his body down and raised it again quickly, till at last, wearied by the difficult motions, he sank to the ground to catch his breath. He continued to sing, however,

* Burchell was not acquainted with the dance of the Mincopies, for his Bushman dance was very like it. A Mincopy dancer would, in fact, have moved himself just as the Bushman did.

and moved his body, keeping time with the singing of the spectators. After a few minutes he rose again and resumed his dance with new vigour. When one leg was tired, or when the course of the dance brought it about, the turn of the other came. The dancer wore a kind of rattle on each ankle, which was made of four springboks' ears joined together, containing a number of pieces of ostrich-egg shells, which gave at each movement of the foot a sound that was not unpleasant or harsh, and considerably enhanced the effect of the performance. Although only one person could dance at a time, the whole company present took part in the ceremony, all the members, as well as the dancers, accompanying and assisting in the evening's entertainment. This accompaniment consisted of singing and drumming; all sang and kept time by gently clapping their hands. The words they used, which mean nothing in themselves, were *Ae-o*, *ae-o*, continually repeated. The hands were struck together at the sound *O*, and the dancer pronounced the syllables *Wa-wa-kuh*. Neither sex was excluded from the singing, and, though the voices did not all give the same tone, they were still in good accord. The girls sang five or six tones higher, and in a much more animated manner." A dance which was performed in the open air in the presence of Arbousset and Daumas was of an entirely different character. The Bushmen, according to their account, "would not dance until they had eaten and were full, and then in the middle of the kraal by moonlight. The movements consisted of irregular leaps, and were, to borrow a native comparison, like those of a herd of gambolling calves. The dancers jumped till they were tired out and covered with perspiration. The thousand-

voice cries they uttered and the movements they executed were so difficult that now one, now another were seen to fall to the ground completely exhausted and covered with blood, which streamed from their nostrils. On that account this dance was called *mokoma*, or blood dance."*

Our information concerning the dances of the Fuegians is very scanty. Dramatic representations, some of which may be mimetic dances, are mentioned of only one tribe, the Yahgans.† Of gymnastic dances among them we know absolutely nothing, but we should not therefore presume that they have none. Of the dances of the Botocudo, too, not a word can be found in most of the accounts. The Prince of Wied expressly denied that there were any, but Ehrenreich saw some after the prince's visit and has described them: "On festive occasions, as when a successful hunt or a victory is celebrated or a stranger is received, the whole horde collects at night around the camp fire for the dance. Men and women form a circle in motley arrangement, each dancer places his arms around the necks of his neighbours, and then the whole circle begins to turn toward the right or the left, all stamping at once lustily with the foot of the side toward which they are turning and drawing the other foot quickly after it.

* There are several points in this account that call for criticism. Two features are missing which, so far as we know, are never wanting in primitive dances—the musical accompaniment and the rhythmical motion. If they are merely unmentioned in the account, then it is very defective; if they are really absent, then the *mokoma* is probably not a real dance, but perhaps a wild outburst of a general intoxication by hasheesh, like those which take place among many of the tribes of the Congo.

† Globus, vol. xlvii, p. 332.

Soon with bowed heads they press more and more closely upon one another, after which they break ranks. All the while a monotonous song is sung, the time of which is followed by the feet." *

Among the Eskimo, at least in the descriptions, the gymnastic dances are of somewhat less account than the mimetic. "The dances," says Boas, "are held in summer in the open air, but in winter in a feast-house built on purpose for them. This house is a large dome of snow, about fifteen English feet high and twenty feet in diameter. In the middle of it is a pillar of snow about five feet high on which the lamps stand. When the villagers collect in this building for singing and dancing, the married women station themselves in a line along the wall and the unmarried ones form a second concentric circle, while the men sit in the inner circle. The children form two groups by the sides of the door. At the beginning of the festival one of the men seizes the drum, steps into the open space near the door, and begins to sing and dance. The songs are composed by the singer himself, and satirical compositions are most in favour on these occasions. While the men are silently listening, the women join in a chorus with the words '*amna aya*.' The dancer, who remains at the same place, stamps rhythmically with his feet and swings his body hither and thither, beating the drum all the time. While dancing he strips himself to the waist, keeping on only his breeches and boots." † In another gymnastic dance, which Bancroft, for some reason unmentioned, calls the national dance

* Ehrenreich, Zeitschr. für Eth., 1887, p. 33.

† Boas, An. Rep. Bureau of Ethnology, pp. 600 *et seq.*

of the Eskimo,* each of the girls steps in succession into the midst of the circle while the others dance around her with hands entwined, singing. "The most extravagant motions gain the greatest applause." While the gymnastic dances are usually solos, several actors may appear at the same time in the mimetic dances. "The dancers, who are commonly young men, bare themselves to the waist or even appear quite naked. They execute numerous burlesque imitations of birds and animals, while their movements are accompanied with the beating of tambourines and singing. They are sometimes fantastically dressed in breeches of seal-skin and reindeer hide and wear feathers or a coloured cloth on their heads." The representations are, however, not limited to animal life. "A monotonous refrain, accompanied by drumming, calls one young man after another upon the dancing place till a circle of about twenty is formed. Then begins a series of pantomimic representations of love, jealousy, hatred, and friendship." †

As compared with the uniform character of the *corroborry*, the mimetic dances in Australia afford a great diversity. The animal dances, again, have the first place. There are emu, dingo, frog, and butterfly dances, but no other seems to enjoy such general popularity as the kangaroo dance, which has been described by numerous travellers. All agree in admiring the mimetic talent which the natives display in them. Nothing more comical and no more successful imita-

* Bancroft, The Native Races of the Pacific Coast, vol. i, p. 67.

† Bancroft, *loc. cit.*, vol. i, p. 67. We pass by the mask dance of the Northwestern tribes for the same reason as we passed the masks in a former chapter.

tion, says Mundy, could be imagined than to see the dancers all hopping round in rivalry.* Eyre saw the kangaroo dance on Lake Victoria "so admirably executed that it would have called down thunders of applause in any European theatre." † Subjects for mimetic dances are afforded by the two most important events of human life—love and the battle. Mundy describes a mimic war dance which he saw in New South Wales. The dancers performed first a series of complicated and wild movements in which clubs, spears, boomerangs, and shields were brandished. Then "all at once the mass divided into two groups, and with deafening shrieks and passionate cries they sprang upon one another in a hand-to-hand fight. One side was speedily driven out of the field and pursued into the darkness, whence howls, groans, and the strokes of clubs could be heard, producing the perfect illusion of a terrible massacre. Suddenly the whole troupe again came up close to the fire, and, having arranged themselves in two ranks, the time of the music was changed. The dancers moved in slower rhythm, accompanying every step with stamping and a grunting sound. Gradually the drum beats and the movements became more rapid till they attained as nearly a lightning-like velocity as the human body can reach. Sometimes the dancers all sprang into the air to a surprising height, and when they struck the ground again the calves of their widely spreading legs trembled so violently that the stripes of white clay looked like wriggling snakes, and a loud hissing filled the air." ‡ The love dances of

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* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 173.

† Eyre, vol. ii, p. 233.

‡ Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 173.

the Australians are passed over in most of the accounts with a few suggestive references. They are hardly suitable for exhaustive descriptions. "I have seen dances," writes Hodgkinson, "which consist of the most repulsive exhibitions of obscene motions that one can imagine, and, although I was alone in the darkness and nobody observed my presence, I was ashamed to be a witness of such abomination." * It will be sufficient to consider one dance of this sort—the *kaaro* of the Wachandi: "The festival begins with the first new moon after the yams are ripe, and is opened by the men with an eating and drinking bout; then a dance is executed in the moonlight around a pit which is surrounded with shrubbery. The pit and the shrubbery represent the female organ, which they are made to resemble, while the spears swung by the men represent the male member. The men jump around, betraying their sexual excitement with the wildest and most passionate gestures, thrusting their spears into the pit." In this dance Scherer, the historian of literature, has discovered the "primitive germ of poetry." War and love are, as we have said, the chief motives stimulating the Australians to mimetic dances, but less suggestive scenes are also represented. Thus a canoe dance is performed in the north. For it the participants "paint themselves with white and red and carry sticks to represent paddles. The dancers arrange themselves in two ranks; each one holds the stick behind his back and moves his feet alternately with the rhythm of the song. At a signal all bring their sticks forward and swing them

* Hodgkinson, Australia from Port Macquerie to Moreton Bay, 1845.

rhythmically back and forth like paddles, as if they were paddling in one of their light canoes.* Finally, we may mention a mimetic dance that symbolizes death and the resurrection. Parker saw it when among the aborigines at Loddon. The performance was led by an old man who had learned the dance from the North-western tribes. "The dancers held boughs in their hands, with which they gently fanned themselves over the shoulders, and after they had danced for some time in rows and half circles they gradually collected into a close circular group. They then slowly sank to the ground, and, hiding their heads under the boughs, they represented the approach, and, in the perfectly motionless position in which they remained for some time, the condition of death. Then the old man gave the sign by abruptly beginning a new lively dance and wildly flourishing his bough over the resting group. All sprang up at once and fell into the joyous dance that was intended to signify the return to life of the soul after death."

No protracted research is needed to estimate the pleasure these gymnastic and mimetic performances afford to the performers and the spectators. There is no other artistic act which moves and excites all men like the dance. In it primitive men doubtless find the most intense æsthetic enjoyment of which they are generally capable. Most primitive dance movements are very energetic. We need only to go back to the years of our childhood to recollect the lively pleasure that was associated with such vigorous and rapid motions, provided that in them a certain measure of duration

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 173.

and exertion was not exceeded. And this feeling was the stronger as the emotional tension relieved by them was more intense. To continue unmoved outwardly when inwardly disturbed is a great pain, and it is a delight to give vent to inner pressure by outer movements. We have seen, in fact, that occasion is given for dances among hunting tribes by any event that excites the mobile feelings of the primitive peoples. The Australian dances around the booty he has secured as the child hops around his Christmas tree.

Yet if the dance movements were only active the pleasure of energetic motion would soon give place to the unpleasant feeling of weariness. The æsthetic character of the dance lies less in the energy than in the order of the movements. We have pronounced rhythm the most important property of the dance, and have thereby only given expression to the peculiar feeling of primitive men, who observe before all else a strict rhythmical regulation of the movements in their dances. "It is astonishing," says Eyre in his description of Australian dances, "to see how perfectly the time is maintained, and how admirably exact is the coincidence of the motions of the dancers with the intonations of the music." * And a similar impression has been made upon all who have observed the dances of the primitive men.† This enjoyment of rhythm ‡ is

* Eyre, vol. ii, p. 231.

† The characteristic rhythmical arrangement of the primitive dances is prominently mentioned in all the accounts; the only exception known to us is the very questionable description of a Bushman dance by Arbousset and Daumas.

‡ Darwin believes that enjoyment of rhythm is a general property of animals. "The perception if not the enjoyment of musical cadence and rhythm is probably common to all animals."

without doubt deeply seated in the human organization. It is, however, an exaggeration to say that the rhythmical is always the natural form of our movements; however, a large portion of them, particularly those which serve in making a change of place, are executed naturally in rhythmical form. Further, every stronger emotional excitement, as Spencer has justly observed, tends to express itself in rhythmical movements of the body; and Gurney adds the pertinent remark that every emotional movement is in and of itself rhythmical. In this way the rhythm of the motions of the dance appears to be simply the natural form of the movements of locomotion sharply and powerfully exalted by the pressure of emotional excitement. The value of rhythm as a factor of pleasure is still not accounted for by this observation; although we can not make a definition avail as an explanation, we are compelled to receive it for the present as a finality. In any case the pleasure is felt by primitive at least as strongly as by civilized peoples. The study of their poetry and music will supply us with further evidence.

So far it has not been necessary to distinguish between gymnastic and mimetic dances, for the pleasure in energetic and rhythmical movements is enjoyed in both kinds alike. The mimetic dances afford primitive man a further delight which he does not find in the gymnastic dances. They gratify his propensity for imitation, which sometimes appears to be developed into a real passion. The Bushmen take the greatest pleasure in "imitating with deceptive exactness the movements of particular men or animals"; "all the Australian aborigines have a surprising gift of mimicry," which they exercise on every occasion; and it is

told of the Fuegians that "they repeat with perfect accuracy every word of a remark pleasing to them that is made in their presence, copying even the manner and the bearing of the speaker." In respect to this trait, a striking analogy exists between primitive peoples and the primitive individual, the child. The same passion for mimicry can be observed in our children, and in them, too, it is not unfrequently gratified in mimetic dances. The propensity to imitation is certainly a universal human property, but it does not prevail with the same force in all grades of development. In the lowest stages of culture it is almost irresistible in all members of society. But the more the differences between the several social members increase with the progress of civilization the less does its power become, and the most highly cultivated person strives above all to be like himself only. Consequently the mimetic dances which play so large a part among the primitive tribes are put further and further into the background, and have a place left for them only in the child world, where the primitive man is forever returning to live anew. The highest pleasure-giving value must doubtless be ascribed to those mimetic dances which represent the working of human passions—as, in the first rank, war dances and love dances; for while they, no less than the gymnastic and the other mimetic dances, satisfy the liking for active and rhythmic movements and the propensity to imitate, they afford besides that beneficent cleansing and freeing of the mind from the wild, turbulent passions that vent themselves through them—that *katharsis* which Aristotle declared to be the highest and best effect of tragedy. This last form of mimetic dance constitutes in fact the transition to

the drama, which appears, from the point of view of development of history, as a differentiated form of the dance. When we seek to distinguish between the dance and the drama among primitive peoples, we have to depend on an external mark—the presence or absence of rhythm. But both are at the bottom identical in nature and effect at this stage of development.

Pleasure in vigorous and rhythmical motions, pleasure in imitation, pleasure in the discharge of violent emotions—these factors afford a satisfactory explanation of the passion with which primitive peoples cultivate the dancing art. The joys of the dance are of course most intensely and immediately experienced by the dancers themselves. But the delights which blaze in the actors stream out likewise over the spectators, and these have further an enjoyment which is denied the others. The dancer can not regard himself or his associates; he can not enjoy the view of the lusty, regular, alternating movements, singly and in mass, as the beholders do. He feels the dance, but does not see it; the spectator does not feel the dance, but sees it. On the other hand, the dancer is compensated by the knowledge that he is drawing the good will and admiration of his public toward himself. In this way both parties rise to a passionate excitement; they become intoxicated by the tones and movements; the enthusiasm rises higher and higher, and swells finally into a real madness, which not rarely breaks out with violence. When we contemplate the powerful effects which the primitive dances produce upon the actors as well as upon the spectators, we can understand without further inquiry why the dance has often acquired the significance of a religious ceremony. It is quite natural

for the primitive man to suppose that the exercises which make so powerful an impression upon him can also exert a definite influence on the spiritual and the demoniacal powers whose disposition controls his fate. So he executes dances in order to frighten away or to propitiate the ghosts and demons. Parker has described an Australian dance which was intended to propitiate *Mindi*, a terrible demon, and secure his aid against the enemies of the tribe: "Rude images, one large figure and two small ones, carved out of bark and painted, were set up in a distant spot. The place was strictly tabooed. The men, and after them the women, decked in foliage and carrying a small rod with a tuft of feathers in their hands, danced up to the spot in a single, sharply curved line; and, having gone round it several times, they approached the principal figure and touched it timidly with their rods." * A similar figure appeared in the religious dance observed by Eyre at Moorunde. "The dancers, who were painted and adorned as usual, wore tufts of cockatoo feathers on their heads. Some also carried sticks with similar tufts in their hands, while others held bunches of green foliage. After they had danced a while they withdrew, and when they appeared again they carried a curious rude figure which rose high in the air. It consisted of a bundle of grass and reeds wrapped in a kangaroo skin, the inner side of which was turned out and was painted all over with little white circles. A slender stick with a large tuft of feathers, which was intended to represent the head, projected from the upper end, and at the sides were

* Parker, The Aborigines of Australia. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 166.

two sticks with tufts of feathers coloured red, representing the hands. In front was a stick about six inches long, with a thick knot of grass at the end, around which was wrapped a piece of old cloth. This was painted white, and represented the navel. The whole figure was about eight feet long, and was evidently intended to represent a man. It was carried for a considerable time in the dance. Afterward two standards took its place, which were formed of poles and were borne by two persons. These, too, finally disappeared, and the dancers advanced with their spears." * It is very probable that other primitive peoples have religious dances; but they have not yet been described. Even in Australia religious dances have been comparatively seldom observed. Gerland says, indeed, that "originally all dances were religious"; but he has not been able to prove this assertion.† In fact, it has no support, so far as is known to us. There is nothing to require us to suppose that the Australian dances possessed originally any other meaning than the one they now suggest to an unprejudiced view. Only the smaller number bear the character of religious ceremonies; the great majority aim only at æsthetic expression and the æsthetic stimulation of passionate emotional movements.‡

The purpose is not identical with the effect. While the purpose of most primitive dances is purely æsthetic, their effect extends widely and mightily beyond æsthetic limits. No other primitive art has so high a practical and cultural meaning as the dance. From the height

* Eyre, vol. ii, p. 236. † Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 755.

‡ In Australia the æsthetic dances are always performed at night, while the religious dances which have been described are performed in the clear light of day.

of our civilization we are at first inclined to look for this meaning in the association of the sexes which the dance brings about. This is, indeed, the only social function that is left to the modern dance. But the primitive dance and the modern dance are so extremely different in their character that no conclusion whatever can be drawn from the one as to the other. The particular feature which has caused the modern dance to be favoured by both sexes—the close and familiar pairing of the male and female dancers—is absent from most of the primitive dances. The dances of hunting peoples are usually executed by the men alone, while the women have only to care for the musical accompaniment. There are, however, dances in which men and women take part together, and these are for the most part undoubtedly calculated to excite sexual passion. We may further assert that even the male dances promote sexual association. A skilful and sturdy dancer will certainly not fail to make a profound impression upon the female spectators; and as a skilful and sturdy dancer is also a skilful and strong hunter and warrior, the dance may contribute in this way to sexual selection and to the improvement of the race. Yet, however great may be the significance of the primitive dance in this respect, it is still not great enough to justify by itself the assumption that no other primitive art exercises so important a cultural function as the dance.

The dances of the hunting peoples are, as a rule, mass dances. Generally the men of the tribe, not rarely the members of several tribes, join in the exercises, and the whole assemblage then moves according to one law in one time. All who have described the dances

have referred again and again to this "wonderful" unison of the movements. In the heat of the dance the several participants are fused together as into a single being, which is stirred and moved as by one feeling. During the dance they are in a condition of complete social unification, and the dancing group feels and acts like a single organism. *The social significance of the primitive dance lies precisely in this effect of social unification.* It brings and accustoms a number of men who, in their loose and precarious conditions of life, are driven irregularly hither and thither by different individual needs and desires to act under one impulse with one feeling for one object. It introduces order and connection, at least occasionally, into the rambling, fluctuating life of the hunting tribes. It is, besides wars, perhaps the only factor that makes their solidarity vitally perceptible to the adherents of a primitive tribe, and it is at the same time one of the best preparations for war, for the gymnastic dances correspond in more than one respect to our military exercises. It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the primitive dance in the culture development of mankind. All higher civilization is conditioned upon the uniformly ordered co-operation of individual social elements, and primitive men are trained to this co-operation by the dance.

The hunting tribes appear to have some perception of the socializing influence of their dances. In Australia the *corroborry* at least serves "as an assurance of peace between single tribes. Two tribes, desiring to confirm mutual good feeling, dance it together." * On

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 755. Among the Queenslanders "the *corroborries* are usually appointed for the confirmation of peace after the conclusion of wars and disputes." Lumholtz, p. 286.

the Andaman Islands the tribes hold a market fair in connection with their joint dancing festivals.* It is proper to remark, finally, in order to estimate the full influence of these intertribal festivals, that they are often of very considerable duration. Lumholtz tells, for example, of one that occupied six entire weeks.

The fact that the highest significance of the dance lies in its socializing influence accounts for its former power and its present decay. Even under the most favourable conditions only a somewhat limited number of persons can engage in a dance at once. We have seen that among the Australians and on the Andaman Islands men of several tribes dance together; but hunting tribes have only small poll lists.† With the progress of culture and the improvement of the means of production the social groups increase; the small hordes grow into tribes, the members of which are much too numerous for all to join in a common dance; and in this way the dance gradually loses its socializing function, and consequently loses also its importance. Among hunting peoples the dance is a public festival ceremony; among modern civilized nations it is either an empty theatrical spectacle on the stage, or, in the ballroom, a simple social enjoyment. The only social function left it is that of facilitating the mutual approach of the sexes, and even in this respect its value

* Man, Jour. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xii, p. 392.

† See the precise estimates of the numbers of the several tribes in Victoria, in Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 43. The whole native population of the Andaman group is estimated by Man at four thousand persons. The strongest Eskimo group among those which Boas studied did not count more than twenty-six men. Boas, An. Rept. Bureau of Eth., 1884–'85, p. 426.

has become very questionable. We can, moreover, suppose that the primitive dance served as a medium for sexual selection toward the improvement of the race, as the most active and skilful hunter is also usually the most persistent and nimble dancer. But mental rather than bodily vigour prevails in our stage of civilization, and the heroes and heroines of the ball-room often enough play but a sorry part in sober life. The ballet of civilization, finally, with its repulsive sprawling attitudes and distorted perversions of Nature, may, to speak mildly, at best but satisfy vulgar curiosity. It can not be said that the dance has won in æsthetic what it has lost in social significance by the development of civilization. We have already pronounced upon the artistic value of our ballet, and the purely æsthetic enjoyment which our society dances as dances afford to the participants and to the spectators is hardly sufficient to account for their popularity. The modern dance presents itself to us in every aspect as a vestigial organ which has become useless in consequence of changed conditions of life, and has therefore degenerated. Its former great function has been long since transferred to other arts. What the dance was for the social life of the hunting tribes, poetry is for civilized nations.

CHAPTER IX.

POETRY.

GOETHE has called the poetry of civilized nations a fragment of fragments. What shall we style the poetry of primitive peoples? The poetry of the civilized peoples is for the most part fixed by writing and printing; the poetry of savages lives chiefly only in uncertain and inconstant memories, and the small fragments of it which have been recorded by European investigations are quantitatively and qualitatively so insufficient that it seems almost presumptuous to venture upon any conclusion from them as to the whole. Formerly the "senseless" stories and the "unpoetical" songs of "savages" were regarded as hardly worth considering. More recently, scientific travellers and missionaries have taken pains to gather up the despised material; but the work of collecting is not even yet generally begun, and where it has been undertaken the harvest has thus far not been rich. We are acquainted with only one Fuegian poetical production of any kind. The poetry of the Botocudo is represented only by two short dancing songs. Man's Andaman collection contains, besides a number of mythological stories, only two songs. We are somewhat better informed concerning the poetry of the Australians, the Bushmen, and the Eskimo. But can we accept the songs and

stories of these peoples which have been collected and translated into European languages as really sufficient material for study? We would not cast the slightest doubt on the linguistic equipment and care of Grey, Bleek, and Rink. But the languages of those peoples are so thoroughly foreign to us that even the greatest linguistic endowment and care can not afford sure protection against occasional sore mistakes. And even if all errors were excluded in the collecting of primitive poems, could they be excluded also in the repetition? When we recollect that it has never been possible to express the charm of one of Goethe's songs in French verse, that the peculiar character of a German poem is always for the most part lost in translating into the nearly related English language, we can hardly expect that European translations can even approximately resemble the original poetical expressions of the hunting deoples, whose language and culture are so extremely remote from our own.* Under such circumstances it would be unreasonable to expect from this first attempt a comprehensive representation and estimation of primitive poetry. At any rate we are not prepared to give more than a rough sketch that probably contains few lines that will not require correction or completion.

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* We will demonstrate by at least one example how greatly the original character of a primitive poem is changed by a European translation. Compare the text of the following Australian song from Encounter Bay with the literal English translation and a free rendering:

Miny-el-ity yarlukē an āmbe, Aly-el-arr yerk-in yañgaiāk-ar.
What is it road me for, Here are they standing up hills.
What a fine road this is for me winding between the hills!

Poetry is the verbal representation of external or internal phenomena in an æsthetically effective form for an æsthetic purpose. This definition embraces subjective poetry, the lyric, which affords expression to the phenomena of the inner world—the subjective feelings and ideas, and objective poetry, which represents in epic or dramatic form the phenomena of the outer world—objective facts and events. In both cases the expression serves an æsthetic purpose; the poet invokes not acts, but feelings, and nothing but feelings. Our definition thus distinguishes the lyric from the unpoetical expression of feeling on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the epic and the drama from didactic and rhetorical representation and description.* All poetry comes from feeling and goes to feeling, and therein lies the mystery of its creation and influence.

Herbert Spencer, in his First Principles, has advanced the doctrine that the poetry of the lowest stages of culture is an "undifferentiated" poetry; that it has as yet formed no separate poetical species, but unites in each of its productions lyric, epic, and dramatic elements, though only potentially. This view fits in excellently with the modern scientific theory of development; but, unfortunately, it does not agree with the facts. In the lowest stage of culture which is accessible to investigation by us, we find the leading kinds of poetry quite as independently and characteristically formed as in the highest. It can not, however, be denied that the lyric of the primitive peoples contains

* "A political song a nasty song," said Goethe, with true poetical feeling. Even the most finely finished political songs are not poetry, but rhetoric in rhyme. Likewise the profoundest philosophical poems are not poetry, but didactics in rhyme.

many epic elements, and that their epic very often assumes a lyric or dramatic character. But if we should call primitive poetry undifferentiated on that account, we should have no right to contrast cultivated poetry with it as undifferentiated, for a pure lyric, epic, or dramatic poetry has never been realized anywhere.

There is no material so close to man as his own feelings. Hence the lyric is the most natural form of poetry, and as no expression lies so close to man as that of speech, the lyric is therefore the most natural form of art. Verbal expression of feeling needs only to take on an æsthetically effective form—it requires only rhythmical repetition, for example—to be lyrical. A child five years of age has found a bright butterfly, and expresses its joy over its discovery in the cry, "O the pretty butterfly!" This cry expresses a feeling, not in order to impart it, but simply to express it; it is thus not practical, but it does not give the expression in an artistically effective form, and is therefore not lyrical. If, however, the butterfly has so charmed the child that it repeats its joyous cry, and that at regular intervals, giving the words at the same time a rhythmical cadence, singing, "O' the pret'ty but'terfly!" the cry becomes a song.

The songs in which the primitive peoples chant their sufferings and joys are usually no more than such simple expressions uttered in the simplest æsthetic form in rhythmical order and repetition. Ehrenreich has communicated some specimens of the songs on the events of the day, which the Botocudo are accustomed to improvise in the evening. "To-day had we good hunt; we killed a beast; we now have food; meat is

good; strong drink is good"; or "Woman young steal nothing; I, I, too, will not steal." A song of praise to the leader of the band is still more laconic. It says, briefly and well, "The chieftain has no fear."* Each of these phrases is intoned rhythmically and repeated.

The Australian lyric does not rise materially above the level of that of the Botocudo. We now possess a fairly comprehensive collection of songs from all parts of the continent. They nearly all consist simply of one or two short rhythmical phrases, which are repeated indefinitely, with or without a refrain.† Such songs are improvised on all possible occasions. "To an old Australian," says Grey, "his song is what a quid of chewing tobacco is to a sailor. If he is angry, he sings; if happy, he sings; if hungry, he sings; and if he is drunk, provided he is not dead drunk, he sings more lustily than ever." The tribe, on returning from a successful hunt, chant a kind of a national song:

> The Narrinyeri are coming,
> The Narrinyeri are coming,
> They soon will be here;
> Kangaroos they are bringing,
> And stepping fast—
> The Narrinyeri are coming.‡

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* Ehrenreich, Zeitsch. für Ethnol., vol. xix, pp. 33, 61.

† A singular exception is afforded by two longer poems, communicated by Grey, who says that he translated them literally from the originals. Gerland, however, has pointed very justly to the artificial structure of the strophes and the cross-rhymes as thoroughly un-Australian. We regard both songs as rather free English poems on Australian motives. Grey, vol. ii, pp. 312, 315. Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, pp. 757, 758.

‡ Taplin, The Narrinyeri.

The wayworn wanderer complains:

I'm tired with my journey.
Through all the Yerna hither
It was a never-ending way.*

As the hunter sits in the evening by his camp fire he enjoys anew the sportsman's pleasures of the day in the song:

The kangaroo ran very fast,
But I ran faster.
The kangaroo was fat,
I ate him.
Kangaroo! kangaroo!†

But another one longs for civilized food:

The peas the white man eats—
I wish I had some,
I wish I had some.‡

The life of Europeans furnishes a particularly rich fund of material for Australian lyrics. When the railroad was opened in the region of the Narrinyeri the sight of the locomotive made so deep an impression on the aborigines that they glorified it in a song that was sung at the *corroborry:*

See you the smoke at Kapunda!
The smoke rising in puffs.
Quick! it looks like a cloud;
It blows like a whale.

When the golden eagle of the beak of a stranded ship was placed upon the gable of a house in Gulwa a song was immediately made concerning the circum-

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* Eyre, vol. ii, p. 239, from Teichelmann and Schürmann.

† Spencer, Descriptive Sociology.

‡ In the original, "*Pindi mai birki-birki parrato parrato.*" Eyre, vol. ii, p. 239, from Teichelmann and Schürmann.

stance, which consisted of a single verse describing the event and the refrain:

O the turkey of Gulwa! O the turkey of Gulwa!*

The braves, when they are preparing for battle, relieve their angry hearts with a song in which they anticipate their vengeance on the hated enemy:

Spear his forehead,
Spear his breast,
Spear his liver,
Spear his heart,
Spear his loins,
Spear his shoulder,
Spear his belly,
Spear his ribs.†

And so on, till every part of his body is doomed. Or they encourage themselves by enumerating their weapons:

Shield of Burru, club and spear,
Bring the throw-stick of Berar,
The broad boomerang of Waroll,
Belt, tassel, apron of Boodan:
Up! Spring, and take good aim
With the straight-poised emu-spear.‡

Sometimes the song itself is made to serve as the dangerous weapon. Satirical songs are general favourites with the Australians. Grey heard the words:

Oh, what a leg,
Oh, what a leg,
You kangaroo-footed churl!

sung in scorn of a native.# When native police offi-

* Taplin, The Narrinyeri. † Grey, vol. ii, p. 309.
‡ Honery, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. vii, p. 245.
# Grey, vol. ii, p. 308.

cers were seen for the first time in the district of Wailwun the words were sung in ridicule of them:

Run away, all you blind fellows,
Run on, forever, I hope,
To Sydney, to Sydney, forever,
Good-bye.*

When a friend has gone away, those whom he has left chant mournfully:

Come back, oh, come back again—oh!

When the first native embarked from Perth for England, the others sang, repeating the words indefinitely:

Whither wanders the lonely ship?
I shall never see my dear one again!
Whither wanders the lonely ship?†

When a relative has gone to the country "from whose bourn no traveller returns" the women of the tribe lift up their cry of mourning. Grey has contributed a mourning song that was sung at the burial of a young man in the southwest:

The young women sang,

My young brother—

The old women sang,

My young son—

Both together,

I never shall see him again,
I never shall see him again!

In conclusion, we give a specimen of the "religious" lyrics of the Australians, a song that was sung on the lower Murray at the festival of the initiation of youth:

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* Honery, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. vii, p. 244.
† Grey, vol. ii, p. 310.

You are ill to-day,
But soon your beard will grow,
Then you will eat with the men
Of the magical meat.*

Most of the poems of this sort, particularly those which are sung at conjurations and for the healing of the sick, are wholly incomprehensible to us, and probably so to the Australians, except to the initiated.

Man has, unfortunately, omitted to give us specimens of the Andaman lyrics. But there is at least one general characteristic of them, from which it ensues that the songs of the Mincopies are not essentially different from those of the Australians. "The object—either an adventure or an event, which has recently occurred to the poet or his tribe—is embodied into a distich or pair of verses; this is followed by a refrain, which sometimes consists only in the repetition of the two solo verses." †

"Almost every Eskimo," says Boas, "has his own melody and his own song. In content, they deal with every conceivable thing: the beauty of the summer, the thoughts and feelings of the poet—on various occasions—when waiting for a seal, for instance, or when angry with another, etc.; or they tell of some important event, as of a long journey. Satirical songs are very much liked. . . . The form of the song is strictly fixed. They are divided into verses of different lengths, which alternate." ‡ Boas has recorded a considerable list of such songs, but has not translated any of them. Rink, on the other hand, gives some extremely characteristic

* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 62.

† Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 389.

‡ Boas, An. Rep. Bureau of Eth., 1884–'85, p. 649.

poems in translation,* from which we select here three specimens. It will be seen that the achievements of Australian and Botocudo lyric poetry are surpassed by them in more than one respect. The first song was obtained from a Greenland Eskimo, Kukook, "who was a poor hunter, but a great friend of the Europeans," and had been sung about seventy years before at a festival in the southern part of Greenland. "The bad little Kukook—*imakayah hayah, imakayahhah—hayah*—speaks thus: 'I will leave the country, In a great ship. For the pretty little woman. I will get me pearls, Such as look as if they were cooked. Then, after I have gone among strangers, I will return again. My mean little relatives—I will call them all to me—and will give them a good sound cudgelling—with a thick rope's end. Then I will marry—And will take two at a time; The dearest little thing—Shall wear clothes of spotted sealskin only, And the other little treasure—Shall have a dress of young sealskin.'" †

Our second example is a satirical duet by two East Greenlanders. It is strikingly like the jeering *Schnaderhüpferln* with which the "burschen" in Upper Bavaria and the Tyrol rally one another:

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* Rink, Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo, pp. 66 *et seq.*

† We give here some verses in the original:

Kukôrssuanguak imakaja haijâ
imakaja ha
haijâ okalulerângame imakaja haijâ
imakaja ha
haijâ avalagkumârpunga imakaja haijâ
imakaja ha, etc.

The refrain "imakaja haijâ" is without meaning, and corresponds to our Tra-la-la or Fol-de-rol.

Savdlat: The South, the South, O the South, over there—
When I was living on the middle coast, I met Pulangitsissok,
Who had grown fat and strong from eating halibut.
The people of the middle coast do not know how to talk,
Because they are ashamed of their speech.
More than that, they are stupid.
Their language is not the same,
Some speak like those in the North, other like those in the South;
Therefore we can not understand their speech.

Pulangitsissok: There was a time when Savdlat wished that I was a good kayakman,
That I could take a good load on my kayak.
Many years ago he wished that I could take a heavy load on my kayak.
That was at the time when Savdlat tied his kayak to mine, for fear that it might tip over:
Then he could carry a great quantity on his kayak,
When I had to tow you and you cried out pitifully—
And were afraid—
And were nearly upset—and had to hold to my kayak-ropes.

The third song is one of a kind very rare in this stage of culture. It is a lyrical glorification of one of Nature's spectacles—the hovering of the clouds around a mountain-top:

The great Koonak Mountain in the South, over there—
I see it;
The great Koonak Mountain in the South, over there—
I am looking at it;
The bright shining in the South, over there—
I admire it;
The other side of Koonak—
It stretches out—
That which Koonak—
Seaward incloses.
See how they (the clouds) in the South—
Move and change—
See how in the South—
They beautify one another;

While it (the mountain-top) toward the sea
Is veiled—by changing clouds—veiled toward the sea—
Beautifying one another.*

The substance of most of the primitive songs is exceedingly meagre and rude. Nevertheless, it is in the highest degree deserving of our attention, for it gives us an immediate insight into the emotional life of primitive peoples. The lyric poetry of hunting tribes very rarely soars to a higher flight; it rather abides with unmistakable preference in the lower regions of sensuality. The coarsest material pleasures occupy a very large space in primitive verse; and we do these poets no wrong when we say that their lyric inspiration is quite as often of the stomach as of the heart. It must indeed appear a real sacrilege to an ideal æsthete that we presume to pass off the eating and drinking songs of the Australians and Botocudo especially as poetical productions. They are nevertheless such, as they are truly expressions of feeling in verbal rhythmic form. No feeling is in and of itself poetic; and there is no feeling which can not be made poetical if it is expressed in an æsthetic form for an æsthetic purpose. It may, moreover, soften the indignation that arises against the use that is made here of the name of poetry if we recollect that even the tenderest lyric poets of civilization occasionally do not consider it unworthy of them to extol the pleasures of the table.

While we constantly meet features in the primitive lyrics that have to us little resemblance to the poetical, we look to them in vain for the subjects which possess

* These two songs, too, like the first, contain in the original an unmeaning refrain which is attached to each verse.

in Europe an indisputable title to glorification in lyrics. When we open any volume of lyric poems we find that by far the largest part of the contents is devoted to the joys and sufferings of love. In the primitive lyrics the relations of the sexes are hardly touched upon except in the coarsest manner. We have never succeeded in discovering a single love song among the Australians, Mincopies, or Botocudo; and Rink, who is best acquainted with it, says of the poetry of the Eskimo that "it has but little room for the feeling of love." * We are at first bewildered in the presence of this lack. Is there, then, a feeling that excites deeper passion, that impels more powerfully to vent itself in poetry than love, "the crown of life"? For the civilized man certainly not, but we have more than once declared that we can not draw any conclusions from the feelings of the higher grades of culture as to those of the lower. Love in our sense is a flower that can not blossom in the poor and uncongenial soil of the hunting life. What is called love in Australia and Greenland is no spiritual affection, but a sensual passion, which is quickly cooled in enjoyment. It can not be denied that examples of what is called romantic love occur even among the lowest peoples, but they are always exceptional. On the other hand, an affection of the heart is not infrequently developed between married couples. But this marital love, which is in perpetual satisfaction, needs no more to publish itself in

* Rink, p. 89. It should never be forgotten that our knowledge of primitive lyrics is very defective. But if the taste for this kind of poetry had only approximately the significance to savages that it has among civilized peoples, our collections, limited as they are, would have contained a considerable number of love songs.

songs in Australia than in Europe. Westermarck says justly, on the whole, that "in the lower stages of human development the strength of sexual love is far less than that of the tender affection with which parents embrace their children." * Our collections, in fact, contain a number of mourning songs on the death of a blood relative or a fellow-tribesman, but not a lyric lamentation over the loss of a lover or a sweetheart can be found in them.

Far less surprising is it that the appreciation of Nature, which has caused innumerable flowers of lyric to blossom in civilized nations, is of very rare occurrence in the poetry of the hunting tribes. The savage is the slave of Nature, and the slave who has to work under the lash for his precarious living has neither time nor disposition to admire the greatness and beauty of his hard mistress. Consequently we wonder less that the lyrics of the Australians, Mincopies, and Botocudo betray no trace of an æsthetic appreciation of Nature than that Rink should have found that song among the Eskimo, which, with its description of the glittering snow peak enveloped in clouds, resembles the latest European poetry of Nature.

The lyrics of hunting peoples generally betray a thoroughly egoistic character. The poet sings of his personal sufferings and joys; the fortunes of his fellowmen rarely elicit a sound from him. The only examples of sympathetic lyrics that have been found in Australia are mourning songs, and even they relate only to relatives by blood and tribal affinity. The sympathy of the primitive man does not usually extend beyond the nar-

* Westermarck, History of Human Marriage, p. 357.

row circle of his tribe. If his lyric mentions a stranger, it is either in a hostile or a scornful way. It is characteristic of all the lower peoples that they take a particular pleasure in satirical songs,* and we have seen in our specimens how base and rude the mockery is; bodily defects are its favourite subject. The primitive peoples are as egotistic and pitiless as the children of civilized life. We met a troop of children one day before the gateway of a school in Berlin who were pursuing a little lame girl with the mocking song:

Ho! ho! ho!
Anna has a wooden leg.
Ho! ho! ho!

Oh, what a leg, oh, what a leg,
You kangaroo-footed churl!

sang the Australians on King George's Sound.

The primitive lyric is as meagre and rude as the primitive life. Nevertheless, these rude expressions of rude feeling probably have for the Australian or Andamanese poets no less value than the more refined expression of higher and more sympathetic emotions have for Europeans. Song is in its lowest as in its highest form the relief of an oppressing feeling, and therefore its effect is essentially the same in its lowest as in its highest form—that is, one of deliverance and relief to the singer. Even the rudest Australian poet can say, with Goethe's Tasso:

Die Thräne hat uns die Natur verliehen,
Den Schrei des Schmerzes, wenn der Mann zuletzt
Es nicht mehr trägt. Und mir noch über alles—

* Among the five songs of Greenland published by Rink, three are of this character.

Sie liess in Schmerz mir Melodie und Rede
Die tiefste Fülle meiner Noth zu klagen;
Und wenn der Mensch in seiner Qual verstummt,
Gab mir ein Gott zu sagen, wie ich leide.

(Tears, balmy tears, kind Nature has bestowed,
The cry of anguish when the man at length
Can bear no more. Yes, and to me besides,
She leaves, in sorrow, melody and speech,
To utter forth the fulness of my woe;
Though in mortal anguish men are dumb,
To me a God hath given to tell my grief.)

When Grey had one day eaten tabooed mussels on his terrible retreat to Perth without heeding the anxious warnings of his native companion, Kaiber, the superstitious terror of the Australian vented itself in song, and Grey heard him till late at night singing:

Oh, why did he eat the mussels?
Now brew the witches' storm and thunder.
Oh, why did he eat the mussels?

He sang his fear to sleep. "Poetry," says Stuart Mill, "is the lullaby of our woes."

Even if these egoistic lyrics have a value for the poet, of what worth can they be to others? The primitive man cares little for the good and ill of his neighbour, and we might suppose that he would be likewise quite indifferent to those songs which relate generally only to the personal sufferings and joys of the poet; but we learn to our surprise that the exact contrary is really the case. "Many songs," says Boas, "are great favourites with the Eskimo and are sung as all popular songs are sung." * In the Andaman Islands a poet

* Boas, An. Rept. Bureau of Eth., 1884–'85, p. 649.

can win "immortality" with a single song.* In Australia single songs are carried all over the continent and preserved through several generations. "There are famous poets among the aborigines whose songs are spread from district to district and sung as much as any popular song in Europe." † Our surprise will not be less when we hear that "such famous songs are even sung by tribes that can not understand their words." ‡ In this last curious fact, indeed, we find the solution of the whole problem. The primitive public is evidently less concerned with the meaning than with the form of the songs.#

It should be recollected that every primitive lyric poet is at the same time a composer, that every primitive poem is not only a poetic but equally a musical work. To the poet the words of the song may have a sense of their own, but to others they are in most cases only bearers of the melody. In fact, we usually have not the slightest hesitation in sacrificing the sense of a

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* Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 389.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 755. ‡ Ibid., p. 756.

There is no lack of similar instances in Europe. An interesting example is found in Boccaccio's Decamerone. After the fifth Novella of the fourth day—it is the story of the unhappy lover who was slain by the brother of the girl, and whose head the bereaved hid in a flower pot—we read: "But then after a time this thing having become manifested, some one composed a song which is still sung to-day, thus:

'Quale esso fu lo mal Cristiano
Che mi furò la grasca,' etc.

This story that Filemena told was very dear to all the ladies, because they had heard the song sung many times, but had never been able to learn by asking what the incident was on which it was based."

song to the form. "Many Australians," says Eyre, "can give no information concerning the meaning of the songs of their own home, and I am inclined to believe that the explanations they offer are very imperfect because more importance is ascribed to the measure and quantity of the syllables than to the meaning." * Another author writes: "In all the *corroborry* songs they repeat and transpose the words so as evidently to sing pure nonsense in order to vary or maintain the rhythm." † The interest in the form is not less decidedly preponderant among the Mincopies. "Their principal effort," says Man, "is evidently to keep strictly in time. In their songs everything is subordinated to rhythm, even the sense. . . . They take the greatest liberties in them, not only with the form of the words, but even with the grammatical construction of the sentences. For example, the refrain of one of their songs runs: 'Chēklū yâ lak'u-myr-à?' or 'Who missed the hard tortoise?' while the same phrase should read in prose, 'Mij'a-yâ-dî chē'-balen lá kàchi're?' . . . It is evident at once to the eye how great the difference is between the two forms, for in this as well as in most of their songs the words are so mutilated in their poetic form, for the sake of the metre, that they are hardly recognisable. ‡ In fact, it occurs not rarely that the poet of a new song has to interpret the sense into ordinary language to the singer as well as to the public." # As to the

* Eyre, vol. ii, p. 229.

† Barlow, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. ii, p. 174.

‡ The origin of a special poetical language, which has been remarked among several lower peoples, may be accounted for in this way.

Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, pp. 118, 389.

Eskimo, it is enough to point to the fact that there are five among the few songs which Boas has collected, the text of which consists merely of a rhythmical repetition of an entirely meaningless interjection.* We are thus forced to the conclusion that lyric poetry in the lowest stages of culture has primarily a musical character and only secondarily a poetical meaning.

It has often been said that the development of poetry begins with the epic. It is true that the literary history of the civilized peoples of Europe begins with epic poems, but the Homeric epics are as little primitive poems as the bronze helmets and swords of Homer's heroes are primitive weapons. An epic poem is the relation of an event from an æsthetic point of view for an æsthetic purpose. It is not absolutely necessary for a poetical narration to appear in a metrical form. A narration in absolutely correct rhythm and blameless rhyme is not necessarily poetical, while another story told in free, unadorned prose may be extremely poetical. The epic poems of the Australians, Mincopies, and Bushmen, except for a few rhythmical passages, are

* We add here a few observations on the form of primitive lyric poetry. Boas has furnished some precise information concerning the rhythmic laws of Eskimo poetry: "Each long syllable can be replaced by two or three short ones; other short syllables stand as unaccented parts before the accented parts of a foot. Really, the rhythmical adaptation of the words to the melody is very arbitrary and changeable, so that it is really impossible to speak of metrical feet. Herein, too, is a plain evidence that the musical rhythm is before everything else decisive as to the form. The rhythmical arrangement of the words is governed closely by the quantity, not by the accent of the syllables." Boas, *loc. cit.*, p. 651. The rhythm of the Australians seems, on the other hand, "to depend on the laws of accent. The Australians, furthermore, use rhyme in their songs." Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 756.

in prose. Only the *Mährchen* of the Eskimo are told for the most part in precise rhythmical recitative. The distinctive marks of a poetical narrative consist in its being intended to influence the feelings and only the feelings. Every story that possesses another exterior object, whether it be the instruction of the auditor or the stimulation of him to action, is alike essentially unpoetical, whether it be dressed in prosaic or poetic form.

In theory an epic poem can be very easily and clearly defined; but as soon as we step out from the theoretical workroom into practical life we suffer the unwelcome experience which incautious theorists who have not wisely avoided this step seldom escape. We stand helpless with our simple definition in the presence of the variously bewildering abundance of actual phenomena. How shall we distinguish an epic poem from a historical tradition? Here is an Andaman story: "One of the ancestresses of the Mincopies had a son who gained great repute by means of his strength and his deeds. But he also, on account of them, excited the envy and the mortal hatred of another man, named Berebi. One day, at the beginning of the rainy season, Berebi went to the mother and son and asked to be permitted to sail with them in their canoe. They consented, and Berebi, carrying a rusty axe and a whetstone, stepped into the boat. Having placed his implements on the bottom of the canoe, he went up to the youth, took his arm and smelled of it from the hand to the shoulder, as if admiring the development of the muscles, murmuring while doing so that he wished to colour his lips with blood. Suddenly he treacherously bit the youth in the arm and killed him; but the

murderer's teeth stuck fast in the flesh of the victim, so that he could not release them, and he was seized and slain by the friends of the murdered man. The two corpses were then cast into the sea, where the youth was changed into a lizard and the murderer into a poisonous fish. The mother in her despair committed such offences that the god Puluga for punishment sent a flood." * Except for its ending, this story might have passed for a historical tradition, while, on the other hand, it might just as plausibly be a poetical invention.† We confess that we are not able to decide the point. Most writers have at hand a very convenient expedient for such cases—every fanciful story is poetical. But they forget, first, that the idea of "fanciful" covers very different breadths among different persons and peoples. A cultivated European will find the story of a man's being changed into a fish or a lizard very fanciful; but such a wonder would probably fit naturally into a rude Mincopy's view of the world. We should be especially on our guard against the popular confusion of fancy and poetry. The poet employs fancy, or creative imagination, but the investigator uses it no less. It requires quite as much fancy to solve a mathematical problem or construct a physical hypothesis as to relate a fairy tale poetically. The essential difference lies in the object toward which the imaginative faculty is directed. Not every fiction, however fanciful it may seem to us, is poetical; but it is so only in case it serves the purpose of arousing and keeping up the æsthetic

* Man. Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii. pp. 167 *et seq.* The poem which we have published on page 29 relates to this story.

† The circumstance of the murderer carrying a rusty (therefore an iron) axe indicates that the tradition is not very old.

feeling. An Australian story tells how the pelican acquired its colouring of black and white: "In the beginning all pelicans were black. One day a pelican was deceived by an Australian, and was so enraged that it painted itself white in order to contend with men. When it was half through with its painting another pelican came to it, and, as it did not know what to make of the curious black and white thing, it gave the first pelican a blow with its beak and killed it. Before this all pelicans were black, but now they are black and white, and this is the reason." * This story is certainly fanciful, yet it does not bear a poetical but rather a scientific character. It was not invented for amusement, but for instruction. It is, in fact, nothing less than a primitive zoölogical theory. The characteristic of a theory is the arrangement of a phenomenon the cause of which is not known with a class of phenomena the causes of which are known. The Australian story conforms exactly to this principle. The Australians are black; and when they are white, it is because they have painted themselves, and that for battle. The pelican is black and white, therefore it has painted itself for battle; but it has not completed the painting, else it would have been all white. The explanation appears ridiculous to a European; it is not, however, intended for civilized Europeans, but for primitive Australians.

The Bushmen account for the origin of the stars with a story relating that "a maiden of a former people —from whom the Bushmen sprang—wanted to make light by which men could find their way home. She

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* Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 478. We have given the story in an abbreviated form.

therefore threw glowing ashes in the air, and the sparks became stars." The train of thought through which the Bushmen conceived this childish story is the same in principle as that which has since led man to his greatest discoveries and his deepest insight. By the side of such efforts of primitive science are found all sorts of philological hypotheses. In the language of the Mincopies, the same word, *gu-rug*, stands for night and for a certain caterpillar. The fact has to be accounted for, and so the following story is told: "One day the sun shone with such burning heat as to cause great distress. Two women who had become fretful over the heat vented their ill humour upon a poor caterpillar, which they crushed. The god Puluga was so enraged at this offence that he sent men a long night, in order that they might learn to prize the blessing of the sunlight more highly. Therefore night is called by the same name as that caterpillar, *gu-rug*."* The literature of primitive peoples is full of stories of this sort, and all such stories are in their substance not poetical. It is highly probable, indeed, that they contain poetical elements, but it is impossible for us to extract them. Consequently we have no alternative except in our study of primitive epic poetry to turn aside from this whole group, notwithstanding it has poetical constituents, and confine ourselves exclusively to those stories which bear neither the character of historical traditions nor of scientific hypotheses. Unfortunately, we can not, in making such a separation, proceed upon any universal principle, but must decide each case by itself, and it is more than probable that we shall frequently

* Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 172.

mistake in doing that. The worst of it is, however, that our material, already scanty without this, will be greatly reduced by this course. The stories which Man collected among the Mincopies are almost exclusively mythical, and only a relatively small number of the Australian stories are undoubtedly poetical. A large number of the Bushmen animal stories must likewise be taken out. Only of the Eskimo stories can we regard a considerable number as purely or predominantly inspired by poetic motives. The following characterization relates simply to the meagre remnant left by this sifting:

The productions of primitive epic poetry are as a whole very limited in scope. Monumental epics, like those of the Indians, Greeks, and Germans, are as rare in this stage of culture as pyramids and palaces. The building stones for such works certainly lie ready here and there. Many of the stories of the hunting tribes are connected as to subject. Among the Bushmen, for instance, the locust is the centre of a whole circle of stories; but the individual stories, though thus related, have never been combined into a poetical unity. Bleek has, indeed, given his collection of South African animal stories the title of Reineke Fuchs in Süd-Afrika, but in reality it at most contains the materials for a South African *Reineke Fuchs*.

The primitive epic also takes its material from the circle which primitive art only rarely transcends—the life of the men and animals which are closest to the interest of the savage. Animal poetry predominates in Australia and South Africa, while the hyperborean art of story-telling generally deals with human material. "The stories of the Eskimo," says Rink, "give us a

true picture of everything that most strongly engages their imagination, of everything that appears great and pleasing to them, and of whatever seems hateful and terrible to them, in life as in nature. They constantly depict to us the great struggle for existence, which compels recognition and admiration of personal courage and strength which represent the primary conditions of successful life; while, on the other hand, the thought of increasing and securing the pleasure of life by means of this power is hardly suggested. Never is much room given in this poetry to the almost universal feeling of love. No wonder that such poverty of material and such simplicity of passion and feeling make these poems monotonous and rather tiresome to us." *

The epic of civilized peoples has been compared to a broad, quietly flowing stream; the epic of savages, on the other hand, may be compared to a narrow, rapid, rippling brook. Their stories have, as it were, only one dimension. The whole interest of the poet and the auditor follows the progress of the action, and hardly a glance is given to all the rest. While in the best modern romances the action only serves to develop the characters, the character in these primitive stories simply serves to carry on the action. Consequently they are never described, but only indicated, and that usually in the slightest and most superficial way. A comparison of animal stories of the Australians and Bushmen with the German *Reineke Fuchs*, with reference to this feature, is exceedingly instructive. In the German animal epic the action is developed consistently according to the characters of the several animals, which are

* Rink, p. 89.

excellently observed and described according to their natural peculiarities. But with the Bushmen and Australians the characters of the animals are generally treated arbitrarily, and always in a wholly subordinate way, and in only a very few cases can any inner relation be discovered between the characters and the strange action. There is as little description of men in the stories of the Eskimo. As a rule, no more is told us of a person than that he is "good" or "bad." A few types have been developed, but an individual character never confronts us. "The old bachelors are always ludicrous and odd; the woman is generally presented as solicitous only for her own household and savings; while the poor widow is distinguished for benevolent good humour; a band of five brothers represent pride and rudeness, and the middle one is always envious." *

Far less does the primitive man dwell upon the description of Nature. We have already pointed out that Nature at large has only a practical interest to the hunting tribes, and have accounted for the fact. Natural scenery is regarded in their stories only so far as is strictly necessary for the comprehension of the action. A tree is a tree, a mountain is a mountain, the sea is the sea, and nothing more. Descriptions of Nature are as rare in the primitive epics as were scenic decorations in the old English theatres. The place of the action is never painted, but only named.

Even the action, which so exclusively interests the primitive story tellers and their auditors, has little in it to attract and fix our attention. The animal stories, especially of the Australians and Bushmen, could

* Rink, p. 90.

hardly afford any special entertainment to a European. The substance of most of them consists of a mixed and loosely related series of strange events, in which no deeper poetic connection is discernible, at least to our eyes. It will be sufficient to introduce one example—a story from the Bushmen locust cycle, in the abbreviated form in which Ratzel repeats Bleek's version:

"The locust took a shoe and changed it into an eland, which it kept in the reeds for a plaything and fed with honey. The ichneumon was despatched to see why the locust brought home no honey; but while the locust was calling the antelope out of the reeds, it was shut up by the ichneumon in a sack; then, by the advice of its grandfather, made a hole in the sack; and the ichneumon called the antelope out of the reeds and shot it. The locust, discovering its dead playmate, wept bitterly, and, following the track, found two meerkats collecting the blood, one of which threw the locust violently down upon the horns of the dead antelope. But the locust surrounded itself with darkness by piercing the gall of another eland-antelope, fled, and lay down at home while the sun was still high. The meerkats having cut the meat of the antelope into strips, hung it upon a tree, and with it their weapons and clothes. This tree rose in the night while they were sleeping, and floated over to the locust and the ichneumon, which by the time their enemies woke had possession of the property. One of the meerkats kept nothing but its girdle, and made a tail out of it." *

Such tales are like the stories our children tell one another. They obviously originated in a taste for the

* Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. i, p. 75.

purely fabulous, and satisfy the requirements of poetical interest in its rudest form. There is no trace in them of a higher artistic unity; one fanciful thought attaches itself to another; the more incoherent they are, the better. As compared with these chatterings, the tales of the Eskimo already represent a considerable higher epic form. As against the opinion that the fanciful is synonymous with the poetical, it is not unprofitable to point to the fact that the more highly developed poetry of the Eskimo contains far fewer fantastic elements than the rudest form of the epic which we have found among the Australians and Bushmen. The originally wildly exuberant fancy is in fact more and more pruned and tamed in the progressive development of poetry; and the best which the greatest poets give us is always likewise the simplest and most natural. The Eskimo knows how to apply the principle of climax and antithesis, and succeeds excellently in arousing strict attention, sympathy, and anger. "The poets," says Rink, "display a peculiar skill in gaining effect and variety from their scanty material. If we regard their tales more closely, we discover a true poetic feeling in the way they illustrate the development of the highest perfection from the most modest beginnings, and set forth on the one side the dangers and on the other the means by which they are overcome, as the relator wishes to direct the attention of his hearers." * When one has read the following story of the little Kagsagsuk, he will acknowledge that Rink is right. It is one of the favourites of the Eskimo, and exhibits all the characteristic traits of their epic art. We give

* Rink, p. 89.

it here, except for a few unimportant abbreviations, in the form in which Rink has published it, on the basis of nine different versions:

"There was once a poor little orphan boy who lived among cruel men. His name was Kagsagsuk, and his foster-mother was a poor old woman. They dwelt in a miserable little kennel at the entrance of the house. They were not permitted to go into the living room of the house; but Kagsagsuk lay among the dogs in the passage in order to warm himself; and when the men woke their sledge dogs with their whips, it was no affair of theirs if the lash struck the poor boy too. When the men were feasting themselves with walrus fat and frozen meat, and little Kagsagsuk lay upon the threshold, they sometimes put their fingers into his nostrils and lifted him up into the air. Consequently his nostrils were enlarged, but otherwise he was as small as ever. They gave the poor fellow frozen meat, but no knife with which to cut it up. His teeth, they said, were good enough for that; and sometimes they pulled out a pair of teeth because he ate too much. His poor foster-mother made him boots and a little spear, with which he could go out and play with the other children; but they threw him down, rolled him around in the snow, filled his clothes with snow, and plagued him in every possible way; and the girls sometimes besmeared him all over with dirt. One time he was going alone to the mountain, and was thinking about how he could become strong. His foster-mother had taught him a magic formula; and as he was standing between two high mountains he called out: 'Strength, come here! Power, come to me!' Suddenly there came a large animal in the shape of an *amarok* (wolf).

Kagsagsuk was so frightened that he ran away; but the animal quickly overtook him, wound his tail like a cord round the youth's body, and threw him down. Kagsagsuk thereupon heard a rattling, and saw a number of sea dog's bones fall from out of his body to the ground. The amarok spoke and said, 'These are the bones that have hindered your growth.' He threw the little one down twice more, and bones fell out each time, but fewer of them. The fourth time Kagsagsuk did not fall to the ground, and the fifth time he remained standing. At last the amarok said, 'If you want to be strong and mighty, you may come to me every day.' On the way home Kagsagsuk felt that he was much lighter, he could likewise run, and he threw the stones around that lay in his way. As he came near the house the girls cried out: 'Kagsagsuk is coming; let us throw dirt on him,' and the boys beat him and plagued him as before; he, however, offered no resistance, but slipped away as usual to sleep with the dogs. From this time on he went to the amarok and felt himself stronger every day, and on the way home he kicked the stones away from in front of him and about on the ground, so that the stones flew around him. At last even the amarok could not throw him, and said: 'This is enough now; human beings can now no longer overcome you; but I advise you still to stick to your old habits. When, however, the winter comes on, and the sea is frozen, then will be your time. Three large bears will appear, and they shall fall by your hand.' That day Kagsagsuk ran all the way back, and threw the stones to the right and to the left. But at home he behaved just as usual, and the people plagued him more than ever. One day in the fall the kayak men brought

home a large piece of driftwood, which they fastened on the shore to a pair of large stones, for it was much too heavy for them to carry all into the house at once. But Kagsagsuk got up secretly at night, unlashed the log, took it on his shoulders, and rammed it deep in the ground behind the house. The men wondered much in the morning, when they could not find the log, till an old woman discovered it behind the house. Then they all ran up in great excitement, exclaiming: 'Who could have done this? There must be a man among us as strong as a giant!' The young men behaved as if they would have it believed that they were the heroes —the impostors!

"Then winter came, and the people of the house abused Kagsagsuk more outrageously than ever, but he continued in his old habits, and did not let them observe anything. One day three men came running with the report that three large bears had climbed an iceberg. Nobody ventured to start out to capture them. Kagsagsuk, however, saw that his time had come. 'Mother,' he said, 'lend me your boots, so that I can go out with them and look at the bears.' The old woman disdainfully threw them to him and said, scornfully, 'Now bring me a skin for my bed, and another for the coverlet.' He drew the boots on, fastened up his ragged clothes, and ran out. The others exclaimed: 'Is not that Kagsagsuk? What is he doing here? Drive him away!' And the girls cried, 'He is gone crazy!' But Kagsagsuk passed through the throng as though they had been only a school of little fishes; ran so violently that his heels struck his neck, and the snow flew around him glittering like a rainbow. He climbed the iceberg with hands and feet, whereupon the largest bear in-

stantly raised his paws against him. But Kagsagsuk turned round in order to make himself secure, seized the bear by the fore paws, and slung it so violently against the iceberg that the legs came off from the trunk, threw the body to the spectators, and exclaimed: 'That is my first catch; skin it and divide it!' The others thought, 'The next bear will surely kill him.' But Kagsagsuk did with the second bear as he had done with the first. Coming to the third bear, he held it by the paws, and struck the spectators with it, saying, 'That rascal there has treated me shamefully, and that one has done worse,' and did not stop till all had run frightened into the house. When he went in he proceeded with the two bear skins directly to his foster-mother and said, 'Here are your bed and coverlet.' Then he ordered her to prepare the meat and cook it. The others now invited Kagsagsuk to come into the living room, but he went humbly under the passage as formerly, and said, 'Really, I can not go over there unless one of you pulls me up by the nostrils.' However, nobody ventured to try this, but his old foster-mother came and did what he required. The men were now all very polite to him. One of them said, 'Pray, come nearer.' And another, 'Come, dear friend, and sit down.' 'No, not there,' said a third, 'that bench has no cover; here is a fine seat for Kagsagsuk.' He, however, declined all their invitations, and sat, as usual, on the narrow, hard side-bench. After the meal one of the inmates of the house sent a girl out to fetch water for 'dear Kagsagsuk.' After she returned, and he had drunk, he drew her gently to himself and thanked her for the service, and instantly began to press her so hard that the blood spurted out of her mouth. He

only said, 'I believe she has burst'; and her parents said, very humbly, 'Oh, that is no matter, she is good for nothing except to bring water.' When, a little while afterward, the youths came in, he called out to them, 'You will make splendid seal hunters,' and seizing them, crushed one and then another, and tore their limbs apart. The parents only said again: 'That is no matter; he was a good-for-nothing.' Kagsagsuk continued executing his vengeance in this way till he had killed all in the house who had ever done him wrong. He only spared the poor people who had been friendly toward him, and lived in peace with them on the provisions that had been stored up for the winter. He chose the best *kayaks* for himself, and practised so industriously in the navigation of them that he was soon able to undertake long journeys to the north and south. Thus he went around in the pride of his heart, and displayed his strength in all the land." *

The story of little Kagsagsuk reminds us in its exceedingly effective form—and partially, too, in its substance—of the best *Mährchen* of the civilized peoples of Europe; and it reminds us of them so much, that the question involuntarily arises whether this Eskimo tale may not be a European fairy story in hyperborean dress. With this question we meet at last one of the greatest difficulties that the study of primitive epic has to overcome. Are the stories of the primitive peoples really primitive stories? For the tale of Kagsagsuk, at least, we believe we can answer this question in the affirmative; but the Eskimo have a large number of stories for the autochthonous origin of which we can

* Rink, pp. 93 *et seq.*

not vouch. Some have such a similarity with well-known Norwegian sagas that it is difficult, without further knowledge, not to account for them as an inheritance from the ancient Scandinavian settlers;* others, again, may have been borrowed from the neighbouring Indian tribes; and still others have, perhaps, been introduced in recent times by European missionaries, traders, and sailors. A like sceptical prudence is proper toward the stories of the Australians and Bushmen. It is always possible that Bleek may speak of *Reineke Fuchs* in South Africa with more justice than he himself supposes. Our *Reineke Fuchs* itself affords the best illustration of the distance to which such animal stories can wander. Obviously the stories which are transmitted from one people to another suffer many transformations in the process, the greater and more profound as the differences in civilization between the peoples in question are greater. The original form, and even the original sense, are frequently lost; and then it is hard to recognise such an immigrant story among the aboriginal poems as to distinguish the mixed posterity of a European waif living in a hunting tribe from a full-blooded native. In the meantime—and we must not deceive ourselves—so long as criticism has not succeeded in purifying the poetical tales of the hunting peoples from all foreign constituents, every effort at a critical estimation of the primitive epic will have only a doubtful value.

The drama is regarded by most historians of literature and æsthetics as the latest form of poetry; yet we

* Compare, for example, the legend of Ititaujang, which Boas (*loc. cit.*, p. 617) has transcribed, with the Saga of Wieland the Smith.

can say, with a certain degree of right, that it is the earliest. The peculiar feature of the drama is the representation of an event simultaneously by speech and mimicry. In this sense nearly every primitive tale is a drama, for the teller is not satisfied with simply relating history, but he enlivens his words by appropriate intonations and gestures—he represents the action dramatically. "The dramatic liveliness and the effect of the Bushman tales," says Ratzel, "is very much heightened by the animals generally speaking the Bushman language in ways indicative of each, for which purpose the teller seeks to give his mouth the form characteristic of the animal represented." * Boas says of the Eskimo story-tellers that "they know exceedingly well how to express the feelings of the different persons through modulations of their voices." † We need only watch children in their story telling to satisfy ourselves that this dramatically enlivened form of enunciation is the most natural and most primitive. Children and primitive peoples likewise are indeed unable to make any narration without accompanying it with the appropriate demeanour and play of gesture. Pure relation requires a command of language and of one's own body which is rarely found among civilized men, and hardly ever among savages. Pure epic is therefore probably the latest among the three chief kinds of poetry.

Common usage, however, means by a drama, not the relation of an event enlivened by mimicry, but its direct mimic and verbal representation by several per-

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* Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. i, p. 78.

† Boas, *loc. cit.*, p. 649.

sons. We can prove the existence of the drama even in this narrow sense in the lowest stages of culture. If we recall the duet of Greenlanders which Rink has published, and conceive—a conception which probably corresponds to the reality—that the two singers are not only relating their adventure but are representing it by mimic gestures, we have a complete dramatic scene. In fact, we discern in these duets, which are very much in vogue, not only in arctic America but also in Australia, one root of the drama.* We have already found the second root in the mimic dances. The duet becomes the drama as soon as it is accompanied by the imitative movement; the mimic dance becomes the drama as soon as it is accompanied by words. The primitive drama is outwardly distinguished from the mimic dance, first by the movements of the actors not being rhythmically regulated, and secondly by their being occasionally accompanied by words. It is not easy so precisely to define the inner difference. It can be said that the drama does not represent a mere uniform action like, for example, canoe paddling, but an action in progressive development; but if we do not do violence to the facts, we shall find it very hard to draw a sharp line of division where there is in reality only continuous transition. Furthermore, words play so subordinate a part in the dramatic performances of hunting peoples that they rather resemble our pantomimes than our dramas. We suppose that such pantomimes or dramas exist among all primitive peoples; but they have thus far been observed only among the Australians, the Aleuts,

* Eyre, vol. ii, p. 240.

the Eskimo, and the Fuegians,* and have been fully described only as among the first two. The dramatic performances of the Eskimo have been mentioned often, but never, to our knowledge, described.† A lively description of a pantomime which was represented by the Aleuts to the members of Krusenstern's Expedition may be found in Choris: "An Aleut, who was armed with a bow, represented a hunter, another a bird. The former expressed by gestures how very glad he was that he had found so fine a bird; nevertheless, he would not kill it. The other imitated the motions of a bird seeking to escape the hunter. He at last, after a long delay, pulled his bow and shot: the bird reeled, fell and died; the hunter danced for joy; but finally he became troubled, repented having killed so fine a bird, and lamented it; suddenly the dead bird rose, turned into a beautiful woman, and fell into the hunter's arms." ‡ The Australian drama, which Lang witnessed, is related to this northern scene about as a moral piece to a romantic fairy tale. In this, too, the performers limited themselves to a dumb play, while the director of the whole accompanied the several scenes of the pantomime with an explanatory song. The performance took place on a moonlight night in a clearing in the woods lighted up by a great fire. The orchestra consisted of about a hundred women, and about five hundred native spectators were present. "The first scene consisted in the representation of a

* The dramatic performances of the Yahgans, which Bove has mentioned but not described, may really be mimic dances.

† Compare our deductions concerning the mimic dances of the Eskimo, pp. 208, 209.

‡ Choris, Voyage pittoresque autour du Monde.

herd of cattle which came out of the woods to pasture on the meadow. The black players had painted themselves appropriately to their characters. The imitation was skilful; the motion and behaviour of each head of the herd were amusingly natural. Some lay on the ground and chewed their cuds. Others stood and scratched themselves with their horns and hind feet, or licked their companions or their calves. Others rubbed one another's heads in a friendly way. After this bucolic idyl had lasted a little while, the second scene began. A band of blacks were perceived creeping upon the herd, with all the precautions which the natives use in such cases. At length they were near enough, and two cattle fell, struck by spears, to the highest delight of the spectators, who broke out in enthusiastic applause. The hunters pretended to skin their prey, dress it, and cut it up—all with the most painstaking exactness. The third scene was opened with a trotting of horses in the wood. Immediately afterward a troop of white men appeared on horseback. Their faces were painted a whitish brown; their bodies blue or red, to represent coloured shirts; and the lower parts of their legs, in the absence of gaiters, were wrapped with brushwood. These white men galloped straight up to the blacks, fired and drove them back. The latter collected again, and a desperate battle began, in which the blacks beat the whites and drove them back. The whites bit off their cartridges, fixed the caps on their guns—in short, went regularly through all the motions of loading and firing. As often as a black fell, the spectators groaned, but when a white man bit the dust a loud shout of joy went up. At last the whites were disgracefully put to flight, to the un-

bounded delight of the natives, who were so excited that the merest trifle might have changed the sham fight into bloody earnest." *

This result of the Australian drama involves nothing surprising to a European. We have long been accustomed to honour poetry as the most effective art. Borne by mighty geniuses, poetry rose centuries ago to uncontested predominance in Europe. Sometimes its hegemony threatens to degenerate into a despotism through the zeal of its critical champions who to try force the laws of poetry upon the other arts. In any case no other art since painting and sculpture, newly born in the Renascence, have grown old, can compare with poetry in the breadth and depth of its social influence. Modern history marks whole epochs of civilization with the name of some poet or poem; and poetry has more than once, through a single work, impressed a peculiar stamp upon a whole generation. Poetry largely owes this royal position to its essential peculiarity. No other art has such unlimited command of so limitless material. There is no phenomenon in the inner or outer world which poetry has not the means of grasping and illustrating; and while its means—spoken forms—are accessible and familiar to everybody, they are at the same time capable of the most manifold and refined æsthetic perfection. Yet all this richness of material and means continues unfruitful, like an enchanted treasure, till a hero comes who is able to capture it, while generations may pass looking for him in

* Lang, The Aborigines of Australia. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 171. The European incidents detract nothing from the primitive character of the representation.

vain. For three hundred years the princes of poesy have succeeded one another in Europe like the kings in Macbeth's vision; from Shakespeare to Goethe—what a series of crowned heads! Former epochs, too, had their great poets; yet the greatest masters of antiquity and the middle ages did not probably exercise so broad and mighty an influence over their contemporaries as proceeds in modern times even from mediocre poets. The later poetry, in fact, owes its position of power to an advance which is wholly outside of itself—the invention of the art of printing. Through the press the poet can speak to a multitude compared with which the thousands who can assemble in a gigantic building like the Coliseum are as a drop in the ocean. Guttenberg forged the weapons for poetry with which it has conquered the world.

In what does this powerful influence of poetry on social life consist? Every poem primarily expresses only the feeling of the poet; but it expresses it in a form that arouses similar feeling in those who hear and read it. The note which the poet strikes causes all the chords of like tone which it reaches to sound in unison or harmony with it. The great poet holds the enchanted fiddle of the German legend, and the executioner drops his cord, the smith lets his hammer fall, the student shuts his book, to listen: the same feeling vibrates through them all, and their hearts beat in the same time—they have become one with the poet and with one another. Poetry unites men, whom the interests of life separate, by invoking the same feeling in all; and, by constantly repeating the invocation, it finally produces a lasting unity of mood. The practical value of such poetical unification is demonstrated to us

by history. Politics rent Italy, but poetry united it; the mighty voices of its great poets, which spoke to the Neapolitans as well as to the Lombards, kept alive in Italians through the long years of separation and servitude the consciousness that they were and ought to be one people. The Germans have had equal experience of the unifying power of poetry. The "Holy Roman Empire" fell to pieces, and in life we felt only as Prussians, or Swabians, or Bavarians, till our great poetry taught us to feel again that we were Germans. In this sense it may be said that Goethe had no less part in the foundation of the new German Empire than Bismarck. Poetry accomplishes still more; it not only unites men—it elevates them, too. The poet, it is true, can elevate his public only when he himself stands above it. But in this case the expression of his higher and nobler feelings awakens in the others a more refined and richer emotional life than that which practical life has matured in them. Nevertheless, even the greatest poet is never able to draw out from his hearers feelings of which they are not naturally capable; he can awaken and develop only the moods that are present; but without him these higher moods would be even more dormant than the seed in a clod on which no sunlight falls. In the hours when the rays of a poetical work illuminate our souls, we feel what we can be and what we ought to be. And even when the holy hour passes away—if it has been rightly lived—it can not go without leaving its traces in our lives. The æsthetic feelings which poetry arouses in us are not feelings foreign to life; the poetic excitement is rather a stimulation in peculiar shape of the same feelings as determine the conduct of life, *Vitæ est dum*

ludere videmur. In this way—and not through any rhymed or unrhymed moral preaching, for which only bunglers misuse poetry—the great poets have been teachers of mankind. The peoples have at all times felt, more or less clearly, what they owe to great poets. The Greeks listened to the songs of their Homer with the same reverence as to the voice of the Delphian divinity. The people of the middle ages looked up to Virgil with superstitious awe as to a magician and prophet; the figure of Dante rises in superhuman magnitude in the cities and the heart of Italy; and the hand of the critic who ventures to write about Goethe involuntarily trembles when it touches the hem of his garment.

Poetry can indeed as readily turn its power to evil as to good. While it can on the one hand develop the germs of higher and nobler feelings, it can on the other develop the lower and debasing instincts that slumber in every soul; and it can not be denied that for the poet who elevates his readers there are a dozen others who drag them down into the filth in which they are themselves at home. Especially to-day, in the face of the epidemic spread of the lowest cheap romances, one may be pardoned for sometimes doubting whether poetry is on the whole a curse or a blessing to social life. Indeed, if the peoples are not successfully protected by the diffusion of good writings against poisonous infection by bad ones, the time will certainly come when we shall long for Plato's state, in which poets of this sort were duly honoured as "holy, wonderful, and charming men," and then politely led across the borders.

Has poetry a like significance in the lives of the

hunting peoples? It has not the command of the same means of diffusion. The primitive peoples have neither printing nor writing; their poems are propagated only from mouth to mouth.* Furthermore, the language set narrow limits to their spread. Just as the primitive peoples have been split up into numerous little, separated tribes, so the primitive languages have been split into numerous little, separated dialects. In South Australia "every solitary wandering tribe has its own language";† and not rarely tribes very near one another in space are in speech far distant.‡ That the members of different tribes can, nevertheless, in case of need come to an understanding, proves nothing against our view that this multiplicity of languages is a great hindrance to the spread and influence of poetical productions. Single songs, it is true, go from their homes into the remotest parts of the continent; we are nevertheless satisfied that not the poetical substance but only the musical form reaches the natives in this way. There are no less than eight different dialects on the small Andaman group. When Lieutenant Temple compared two immediately neighbouring dialects, he found that in every thirty words only three were identical, while inflections were altogether different from one another.# The various tribes of Bushmen also speak their special dialects. While Bleek remarks that no one Bushman language exists in Cape Colony, which is so different

* The rude attempts at writing which are found in this stage of civilization, the notches of the Australians and the pictures of the Alaskan tribes, are wholly unfit, by their nature, to express a poetical form.

† Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 706.

‡ Ibid., p. 707.

Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 122.

from the rest as from that of the Hottentots, we have no right to conclude that their dialects are not considerably different from one another; for the same investigator tells us that "the Bushman language is certainly no more nearly related to the Hottentot than the English to the Latin." The dialects of the Eskimo seem to be more nearly alike, although "the languages of the tribes west of the Mackenzie are considerably different from those of the east"; * but the extremely scattered condition of the thin populations here in the far north forms an insurmountable barrier to rapid and general distribution of poetical works. "The small settlements of the Eskimo," says Rink, "are separated from one another by desert wastes of ten, twenty, or even a hundred miles. Although it is highly probable that these various scattered tribes have gone out from a common home, their intercourse is at present limited, and we may assume without exaggeration that the tribes of Greenland and Labrador have in all probability had no intercourse with those who live on the coast of Bering Strait for at least a thousand years, but, on the contrary, have no knowledge of their existence." † Consequently all their stories of recent origin bear "the character of family traditions." The tribes of the Eskimo further possess, like other hunting peoples, a common treasure of poetical traditions. To all appearance, however, the poems of this last sort have not been propagated independently, but are inherited from their ancestors; the tribes

* Rink, p. 14. "The difference in language between Greenland and Labrador is less than that between Swedish and Danish."

† Rink, p. 84. "When Dr. Kane visited the small Eskimo tribes in Smith Sound, the natives there were much surprised to find that they were not the only men on earth."

brought these with them from the old common home, and have preserved them in their dispersion.

As poetry in the lowest grades of civilization is destitute of the means of uniting wider circles in feeling, it is also not so capable there, as in the upper grades, of enriching and ennobling the emotional life of its hearers. The primitive poet is only in extremely exceptional cases above the level of his public. Not at all that Nature has not produced any pre-eminently endowed individuals among these peoples; but the low civilization which makes the same inexorable demands on all the members of a hunting tribe alike, holds the different individuals fast to the same inferior level in their development. And so we see that every native in Australia "himself provides the songs of his house," just as everybody makes for himself what implements and weapons he needs; and the songs of one are therefore worth quite as much or as little as those of another. Stokes boasts of the ease and quickness with which one of his native companions, Miago, could make a song on every theme that struck his poetical fancy;* but this gift of improvisation is not a privilege of any particular person, but a common possession of all Australians. When, however, peculiar songs gain special repute, their fame is not due to their poetical but to their musical value. Among the Eskimo, too, "nearly everybody has his own songs." In their epic poems, on the contrary, signs of individual higher talents are not rarely found. The story of little Kagsagsuk, for example, evidently reveals a poetic gift that rises high above the general average. That the natives them-

* Stokes, Discoveries in Australia, vol. ii, p. 216.

selves are not without apprehension of this excellence is shown by the circumstance that they closely watch the teller of stories of the kind, lest he diverge, even by a word, from the time-honoured form. The Australians honour the names of a few famous poets, which probably belong to a distant time in the past. Thus a consciousness of the significance of poetry lives even in the hunting peoples. This significance is not so powerful in their life, it is true, as it is for that of civilized peoples, but it is strong enough. While primitive poetry is destitute of means of extending its unifying influence far over contemporary generations, it still connects succeeding generations. In the stories and songs which one generation transmits to another, posterity recognises the voices of their ancestors; and while they listen to their woes and share their emotions, they feel that they are members of an aggregate which gives support and significance to their individual life. So here, too, poetry exercises its office as mediator among men.

CHAPTER X.

MUSIC.

Music appears, at the lowest stage of culture, in the most intimate connection with the dance and with poetry. Of a dance without musical accompaniment the primitive tribes know as little as do civilized peoples. "They never sing without dancing, and inversely," says Ehrenreich of the Botocudo; "hence they designate both by the same word."* The Eskimo accompany their dances with singing and drum-beating, and the music is kept so much in the foreground in the exercises that the building in which the dances are held is not called the dance-house, but the singing-house (*quaggi*).† The dancing festivals of the Mincopies may be regarded as equally musical festivals. "The preparations consist chiefly in practising the solo and the chorus which are to be sung at the dance."‡ In Australia the women of the tribe form an orchestra for the *corroborry* of the men; and the dancing Bushman moves to the time of the drums and the singing of the spectators. The musical accompaniment is as indispensable to the primitive dramas and pantomimes as

* Zeitsch. für Eth., 1887, p. 33.

† An. Rep't Bureau of Eth., 1884–'85, p. 600.

‡ Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 389.

to the mimic dances from which they have been developed. In an Australian spectacle, for example, "the director sang an explanatory text to the single scene, accompanied by the women, who repeated the refrain of the song in chorus, and beat the time with sticks on their opossum skins." * The primitive lyric is sung. The words of an Australian, Andamanese, or hyperborean song are always carried by a melody; or, rather, the words always carry a melody, for the latter seems to be so much the principal thing that for its sake the words are changed and mutilated till their meaning is lost. Lastly, the epic poems, or parts of them at least, are not simply told, but pronouuced in a recitative song. Dance, poetry, and music thus form a natural unity, which can only artificially be separated. If we would correctly understand and estimate the conditions and effects of each of these primitive arts, we should always bear in mind that they are not independent, but stand in the closest vital connection.

On the other hand, we are told that music, which is externally so intimately associated with poetry and the dance, is internally perfectly distinct from them; that it is an art wholly of its own kind, which can be compared, as to means and effects, with no other art. Nobody has insisted more energetically on this distinct position of music than Schopenhauer. "Music is quite independent of the visible world, is absolutely ignorant of it, and could exist in a certain way if there were no world; which can not be said of the other arts." † All the other arts take their material and

* Lang. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 170.

† Schopenhauer, Sämmtliche Werke (Griesbach's edition), vol. i, p. 340. Even before Schopenhauer, Hoffmann had in his ingenious

models from the visible world, from Nature; they are imitative, representative arts; but music, in its pure work at least, copies no natural phenomena of any sort. It creates, as Gurney says, audible forms, successions and combinations of tones which have no prototype in Nature, and do not exist outside of music. This view is indeed opposed by another, which regards music as an imitation of Nature equally with all the other arts; and this latter view is not only much older, but so far as we can see, is still much more generally accepted than the former. It has been expressed in its simplest and clearest form by the Abbé Dubos. "Just as a painter imitates the forms and colours of Nature," he says, "so does the musician imitate the notes, the accents, the sighs, the modulations of the voice—in short, all the tones through which Nature herself expresses feeling and passions." Since Dubos wrote, this theory has changed its dress more than once, without having undergone any considerable development; at last it has been taken up in our own time by Herbert Spencer,

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Kreisleriana described the peculiar quality of music in spirited words. "How extremely wonderful is music!" he makes his Johannes Kreisler exclaim. "How little can man fathom its deep mysteries! But does it not dwell in the heart of man, and so fill him within with its charming vision, that his whole mind turns to it, and a new, brightened life delivers him already here below from the pressure, the prostrating misery of the earthly? Yes, a divine power penetrates him, and yielding, with childlike, pious disposition, to that which the spirit stirs up within him, he is able to speak the language of that unknown, romantic spirit realm, and unwittingly, like a pupil who has been reading aloud in his master's book of enchantment, he calls forth all the glowing apparitions from within himself, so that they flit through life in bright round-dances, and fill everybody who is able to contemplate them with infinite, nameless aspirations."

who has endeavoured to establish it firmly and give it a richer development for the advantage of his philosophy of evolution.* Edmund Gurney, in his admirable work, The Power of Sound, has summarized in a few words all the essential points upon which Spencer supports his theory. Spencer says that the sources of music lie in the cadences of impassioned speech, and that it has reacted upon speech by making these cadences more various, complicated, and expressive. He bases this theory on the hypothesis that the vocal qualities which denote excitement of feeling are precisely those that distinguish song from ordinary speech—viz., loudness, quality of *timbre*, marked deviations from a medium pitch, breadth of intervals, and exceedingly rapid change. He is therefore of the opinion that singing originates through the emphasizing and intensifying of these properties.† Spencer thus says that song and all music in its train are a more characteristic and more richly developed imitation of emotional speech—that is, he affirms, in substance nothing else than what Dubos held. This derivation of music from speech evidently does not agree with the first expressed view of its peculiar nature. The advocates of the separate right of music trace it, therefore, logically to a completely independent musical beginning; they are, to use Gurney's expression, convinced that the oak grew from an acorn.

It is evident, without further remark, how important as an aid in the decision of this question is the study of

* Herbert Spencer, On the Origin and the Function of Music. Concerning the earlier history, compare the profound and extremely interesting chapter, The Speech Theory, in Gurney, The Power of Sound, London, 1880.

† Gurney, p. 476.

primitive music. From Spencer's point of view, we should expect that music to be very closely like impassioned speech. If it should be shown, on the contrary, that music in its beginnings is already as sharply different from emotional speech as it is in its later forms, the evidence would fall with decisive preponderance into the other scale of the balance.

We can distinguish in music, as in every art, between substance and form. The substance of music consists of tones. The forms to which these tones are attached are controlled by two different principles, both of which are equally indispensable to musical effect—the principles of rhythm and harmony. Musical rhythm in its simplest form arises through the production of a tone or a small group of tones at regular intervals of time. Harmony arises from the fixing of a tone of a certain pitch in a perceptible relation to a tone of another definite pitch. On the principle of rhythm, the tones are quantitatively arranged, while on the principle of harmony they are qualitatively arranged. Rhythm and harmony together form melody; in other words, melodic forms consist of successions of notes which are rhythmically and harmoniously arranged.

The first musical instrument of mankind was, without doubt, the voice. Vocal music prevails very decidedly over instrumental in the lowest stages of civilization. It is very easy to collect a great series of descriptions and criticisms of songs of primitive tribes and illustrate them by examples; but it is difficult to obtain from such a compilation anything like an adequate idea of the character of primitive song. European transcriptions of primitive melodies must

be received, without exception, with the greatest caution, for our system of notation has so little correspondence with the various scales of the several hunting peoples that the conveyance of the peculiarity of the originals can not be relied upon at all. European judgments of the æsthetic value of the songs are completely and fundamentally worthless, because it is of no importance to our study how primitive music, which is intended for primitive ears, may affect a European. We shall consequently select from the accounts as far as possible only those which contain the most definite and objective statements.

If we may trust the judgment of the Prince of Wied, the singing of the Botocudo is the rudest to be heard on the earth. "The singing of the men is like an inarticulate bellowing, continuously alternating in three or four notes, now high, now low; the breath is drawn deeply from the chest, while they lay the left arm over the head and stick a finger into each ear, especially when they wish to make themselves heard by the spectators, and force the mouth, which is terribly deformed by the *botoque*, wide open. The women do not sing so loudly or so unpleasantly; at the same time, the hearer catches only a few notes, which are constantly repeated."*

The Mincopies seem to be only a little superior to the Botocudo in their musical efforts. Man found that the brief melodies, which are repeated indefinitely by the chorus in their dances, became excruciatingly monotonous as they were continued. A specimen which he publishes from Dr. Brander's transcription moves

* Wied, vol. ii, p. 41.

within three notes. However, it is more than doubtful whether this European travesty gives a correct representation of the Andaman melodies. An experiment which a friend of Man's made with five women, seven men, and three boys, resulted in the conclusion that "the natives have not the most remote idea of definite pitch." It was impossible for them, even when they happened to hit upon the keynote which the European gave them, to go up and down the scale.* On the other hand, all Mincopies have a very strongly marked sense of rhythm, which is always strictly maintained.

The same preference for rhythm is apparent in the music of the Australians. "The natives," says Lumholtz of his Queenslanders, "have a poorer ear for melody than for time; and yet I have learned from my people to sing several quite melodious songs. My songs do not please them at all. They were pleased with only one of them, when I sang it to them in strictly regular time."† The general characterization drawn by Gerland of Australian singing confirms these descriptions: "They sing much and not badly in a well-sustained, grave, and even melancholy way. They are also able to sing foreign songs, though they do not generally find European music at all agreeable; frequently it makes no impression on them, or they ridicule it."‡ They always kept accurately with the time, which was generally, according to Beckler, in rapid movement.

* Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 392.

† Lumholtz, p. 200.

‡ Grey relates, however, that his native servant was so impressed with God save the Queen, which he heard in the theatre at Perth, that he broke into sobbing.

Indeed, the Australian melodies given by this author, which he had learned from a German who knew them all by heart, and what he further says of the "absolutely faultless" concordance of the voices, of the "charmingly pure" enunciation of the octaves by the women and children, of the burning log with which the camp was illuminated, and of the death song sung to it, form a brilliant portrayal of beauty and romantic effect. The single melody rising from $\bar{G}$ to $\bar{D}$ in chromatic movement, in three-quarter time, and then, still chromatically, going from $\bar{D}$ to H, and what he gives of the melody, is certainly not objectively conceived; still less so are his death song in E flat, and his *corroborry* in C sharp, which both have a European character, and are certainly greatly modified, even if they possess a kernel of native originality, which they most probably do. Freycinet also gives melodies from New Holland, but seems to have sacrificed much to our time and our notation. Yet his transcriptions agree with those of Beckler and with themselves, in that they all show a constant fall from $\bar{\bar{F}}$ to $\bar{F}$, that second intervals and the chromatic movement are much favoured (one of his songs consisting of the chromatic scale from $\bar{D}$ down). The transcriptions are unsatisfactory, aside from their assimilation to European standards, because of the inexact estimation of the intervals; those which are written chromatically in them are certainly only quarter tones, mere shadings, which are perhaps never regarded or perceived as substantial tones. The fundamental motive of this music appears to be starting with a tone or an interval of the second, and the gradual falling of the voice from this tone to about an octave below. The whole would then

be comprehended, although imperfectly, as merely a—certainly well-contrived—falling of the voice from that one note with various rhythmical alternations. Trioles are numerous in Freycinet's and Beckler's transcriptions. Brown's description agrees with these: "They begin their song loud and shrill, and then let their voices fall to an extreme piano. Moreover, their speech on all festive occasions passes into a recitative singing, and every stronger emotion appears to urge them to sing." *

The music of the Eskimo, so far as we can judge, stands at about the same level. Even in their short melodies rhythm prevails over harmony. The number of notes is rather limited, and the intervals are not strictly observed. Boas has published a considerable number of specimens, but he himself admits that the adaptation of the melodies to our system "is somewhat arbitrary." He has further tried to divide the melodies into two groups, corresponding with our major and minor modes. But to us this effort only proves how inadequate are all such pains.

The highest place in this musical classification belongs without doubt to the Bushmen. "The Bushman possesses a special musical talent," says Theophilus Hahn. "He picks up melodies quickly and very correctly. My father was a missionary among the Namaqua Hottentots. He made experiments in the cultivation of wheat in the meadows near Angra Pequena, in which he was assisted by the Bushmen living there; and it was a pleasure to him to sing chorals to them in the evening with the accompaniment of the harmonium.

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, pp. 752 *et seq.*

To his astonishment, the Bushmen in a few days sang the melodies he had played to them, with the Dutch words, which were unintelligible to them." The best characterization of the native music of the Bushmen is given by Liechtenstein. We quote his words here, although they do not relate exclusively to singing: "We had gradually become so accustomed to the monotonous sound of the Bushman music that our sleep was never disturbed by it, but it rather put us to sleep. When heard in the distance it is not at all unpleasant, but mournful and soothing. Although the music does not comprise more than six tones, which besides do not belong to our scale, but form intervals quite foreign to it, yet the method of vocalization of these tones, the unusual rhythm, and the strangeness—I might say the wildness—of the melody give it a very peculiar charm. I venture to use the word 'high,' for although the intervals do not correspond with ours, they still present perfectly regular and easily comprehensible relations which please the ear. There are only three intervals between the keynote and the octave. The first is at least a little lower than our major third; the second lies about midway between the minor and the major fifth; and the third between the major sixth and the minor seventh—so that one might fancy that he was hearing modulations first in the chord of the minor seventh. Yet each lies higher in its relation to the keynote; the ear does not feel so much the need of closing with a pure triad, and one is even better satisfied without it. Skilful *gora* players bring out the second and sometimes even the third interval in the higher octave. These higher tones are, however, somewhat broken, and rarely form pure octaves to the

corresponding lower tones. There are no melodies proper, but always only a long, protracted alteration of the same tones; and indeed the keynote is struck again before every tone. It should be observed, finally, that the intervals in question are not peculiar to the special instrument used."

The first thing that strikes us in all these descriptions is the fact that the hunting peoples attach greater importance in their singing to the rhythm than to the harmony. The rhythm, with its strictly observed regularity, appears everywhere as the more important and more complicated element as against the harmony, with its uncertain, wavering intervals, limited to a few notes. It is not difficult to account for this relation. We need only recollect that a great many of these melodies are sung at the dances, and that the dance always moves in exact time. Furthermore, the sense of rhythm has also undoubtedly been developed through the primitive instrumental music.

The musical instruments of the lowest stages of culture serve for the most part only to mark the time. The most widespread instrument of this sort is the kettledrum. It seems to be wanting among only one of the hunting tribes, the Botocudo. All the others have it in a more or less rude form. The most primitive form of the kettledrum, which is probably the most primitive and oldest form of musical instrument in general, is found in Australia.* The instrument, with the beating of which the women there

* Simply noisy instruments are indeed at least quite as old; the tuft of leaves, for instance, which is worn around the ankles at the Australian *corroborry*, and the dance-rattles of the Bushmen, which Burchell has described to us in his account.

accompany the dance of the men, is nothing but the tightly stretched or rolled opossum skin which is at other times worn as a mantle over the shoulders.* We regard the ingenious wooden drum with a skin drawn over it as not of Australian invention, but as borrowed from the Melanesians. Another time-beating instrument, used in the north, has, however, a strictly primitive character—"a thick, wedged-shaped stick of hard wood, which, when struck, gives forth a peculiar loud sound."† This Queensland sounding-stick forms a transition to the curious drum of the Mincopies—the sounding-board, which the director of the dance treads with his foot. It is a scutellate arched board of very hard wood, and is sometimes five feet long and two feet wide. The concave side is usually decorated with designs in white clay. In using it the convex side is turned up, the sharpened end is stuck in the ground and held fast with the foot, and a stone is placed under the board to increase the sound.‡ The drum of the Eskimo is a large tambourine with a handle. The ring and the handle are of wood or whalebone, and the skin of seal or reindeer hide. This instrument, which is three feet in diameter, is beaten with a stick ten inches long and three inches thick.# The Bushmen spread a hide over the opening of an earthen or wooden vessel and strike this *rommelpott*, as it is called in the Dutch colony, with their fingers.

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* Sometimes a piece of earth is inclosed in the opossum skin. Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 170.

† Lumholtz. p. 200. The instrument is so rare that Lumholtz was able to see it only once.

‡ Man, Jour. Anth. Inst., vol. xii, p. 399.

Boas, An. Rep't Bureau of Eth., 1884–'85, p. 601.

The drum is still the only musical instrument of a large part of the hunting peoples. The Eskimo, the Mincopies, and most of the Australian tribes are not acquainted with any other. At Port Essington only, the natives had a flute, "which is made of a bamboo stem two or three feet long, and is blown with the nose."* On the other hand, two wind instruments have been found among the Botocudo, who have no drum—a flute of *taquara* cane, furnished with two holes in the lower end, which is generally played by the women,† and a trumpet made out of the skin of the tail of the great armadillo.‡ The Bushmen, for their part, have developed stringed instruments. We can not believe, however, that they themselves invented all the forms they use. The three-sided guitar is surely borrowed from the negroes, and the gourd harp is probably derived from the Hottentots. The last is a wooden bow, to which a gourd is attached as a resonator; and a sliding ring is run over the single cord, by means of which the vibrating part can be lengthened or shortened at pleasure.# Only the *gora*, the most primitive of their stringed instruments, is undoubtedly original to the Bushmen. It is simply a somewhat modified form of the most important practical implement of the Bushmen—the bow. The modification consists in the insertion, on one side, between the end of the bow-string and the wood, of a notched, leaf-shaped, flattened

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 752. In the southern part of the continent the flute was known only by name.

† Wied, vol. ii, p. 41.

‡ Ehrenreich, Zeit. für Eth., 1889, p. 19.

Theophilus Hahn mentions a similar instrument—which he calls an embryo violin—with two strings.

quill. This quill is pressed against the puckered lips of the player and made to vibrate by inspiration and expiration. The tones of this Bushman mouth harmonicum are very weak; the player is therefore accustomed to insert the forefinger of his right hand, with which he holds the bow, into his ear, in order to reenforce the sound and make it more perceptible to himself.* Some of these players are capable of sitting thus absorbed in their music for hours at a time. "A good player," says Levaillant, "applies much practice to bringing the tones out correctly; and it is a remarkable fact that an accomplished artist produces the octave by blowing with greater force, as is done on the flute—an instrument which is capable of giving a very fair idea of the tones of the *gora*."

Shall we undertake to summarize the characteristic traits of primitive music? They come out quite distinctly from the different accounts. In the lower grades of culture, vocal music predominates over instrumental. Both move simply—in short, one-part melodies. Polyphony and symphony are unknown. Of the two factors of melody, rhythm is predominantly developed, while harmony is very defective. In respect to the latter feature, the primitive melodies are distinguished from ours—besides the difference in the intervals—first by a smaller range of tones, and secondly by the weakness of the pitch.

Armed with this knowledge, we are in position to form a judgment of the value of Spencer's theory. The English philosopher supposes that the source of

* A picture of a *gora* player may be found in Ratzel, Völkerkunde, vol. i, p. 70.

music lies in the cadences of impassioned emotional speech; and he bases his supposition on the assumption that emotional speech and music—especially singing—have the same characteristic marks. If such concordance exists, it should obviously appear most plainly in primitive song. According to Spencer, song as well as emotional speech is distinguished from ordinary speech by its greater loudness of voice. But loudness is not really a universal feature either of emotional speech or of singing. The primitive peoples sing softly as well as loudly. We have heard that the singing with which the Australian women accompany the *corroborry* frequently falls to an unintelligible murmuring. "The musical sound of the voice," on the other hand, without doubt, distinguishes primitive singing as it does singing in general from ordinary speech, but it distinguishes it at least as much from emotional speech; for, if we can trust our ears, the latter is much more unmusical than the former. "It contains a larger number of harsh clashings and high consonances, which produce the character of roughness." * Thirdly, singing and impassioned speech agree in their marked departures from a medium pitch. Such departures certainly form a characteristic peculiarity of impassioned speech; "they are abrupt and hard, spring rapidly up and down, and pass over very wide intervals within a single syllable, not rarely a twelfth or two octaves"; but what would follow if these variations were more characteristically expressed and more richly developed? Certainly nothing that would in the remotest degree

* Gurney, p. 476.

resemble primitive singing, for primitive singing generally moves within a small number of tones, the intervals between which also do not even approximately correspond in breadth with those of emotional speech. No more can a trace be pointed to in emotional speech, of that rhythmical order which is so distinct and peculiar a mark of primitive singing. Only in one point is the singing of the hunting tribes really in closer relation with impassioned speech than the singing of the civilized peoples—in lack of definiteness of pitch, in the gliding from one tone to another. Yet this one point is obviously not sufficient to support Spencer's construction, from under which the ground yields and falls away in all other places. As a rule, singing—without speaking at all of instrumental music—is as widely and sharply different from emotional speech in the lowest stages of culture as in all the other stages. Primitive music interposes an objection to Spencer's derivation of music from speech, which it will be hard to overcome.*

How, then, has man arrived at music? Darwin thinks that the faculty of producing musical tones and rhythm was first acquired by our animal ancestors as a means of attracting the other sex. He deduces this opinion from the observation that the majority of male animals use their voices most during the breeding season; first, in order to give vent to their own feelings, and then to attract the attention of the females. If we now assume that, besides attracting attention, the tone also awakens pleasure in the female,

* Gurney has exhaustively shown how poorly Spencer's theory fits the facts in the case of the higher music. Power of Sound, chap. xxi.

this musical faculty will be maintained and improved by sexual selection. The first start would thus be given to the development of active and passive musical capacity. Darwin then refers to the extraordinary power of music to stir up in us tenderness, love, the sense of triumph, and the glorious ardour for war: "A greater intensity of feeling can be concentrated in a single musical note than in several written pages." He cites Spencer's remark that "music arouses dormant sentiments of whose existence we had not dreamed, and of whose meaning we know not," and he adds that the feelings and conceptions which are aroused in us by music or by the cadences of impassioned speech with their indefiniteness and profundity are like a return to the passions and the thoughts of a long-past age. All these facts, however, are comprehensible to a certain extent if we suppose that musical tones and rhythm were employed by our half-human ancestors during the pairing season, when all animals are stirred by the strongest emotions. In this case musical tones are fitted from the deep-laid principles of inherited association, to recall to life within us—in a vague and indefinite form—the strong emotions of a long-past epoch. When we consider that the males of some Quadrumana present a considerably stronger development of their vocal organs than the females, and that one anthropoid species produces an exact octave of musical tones, that it really sings,* it can therefore be no

* This singing anthropoid species is a gibbon (*Hylobates*). Brehm describes the song in his Thierleben as follows: "The female *unko* (*Hylobates Rafflesii*) in London sometimes cried out in extremely peculiar, distinct tones. The cry could be very well

longer regarded as improbable that the predecessors of man—whether male or female, or both sexes—even before they had acquired the faculty of expressing their affection in articulate speech, endeavoured to please one another by means of musical tones and rhythm. The inspired orator, poet, or musician who arouses the strongest emotions in his hearers by his manifold tones and cadences, surely does not imagine that he is using the same means by which his half-animal ancestors in an indefinitely distant past gave vent to their burning passions in war and love. Darwin believes that he can account in this way for the fact that the savage races—he means the negroes and the Hottentots—are so capable of musical development.

Musical forms have been at first, as we have seen, predominantly built up on the side of rhythm—a fact which is perfectly comprehensible to us from the intimate connection of music with the dance. Harmony, on the other hand, has been developed only slowly and uncertainly. In the music of the hunting peoples the pitch is wavering, and the intervals are not at all definite. In what way has the formation of fixed scales been reached? Gurney calls attention to the fact that when we would give solemn and emphatic expression to our deeply felt emotions we increase the resonance of

represented in notes. It began with the keynote E, and rose sometimes a full octave, passing through the chromatic scale. The keynote continued audible all the time, and served as the fore-tone for each succeeding note. In ascending the scale, the single tones followed one another more and more slowly, but in descending, the succession was faster and at last exceedingly rapid. The conclusion was a yell, given with full force. The regularity, rapidity, and accuracy with which the animal went through the scale excited general wonder."

our voice and approach musical tones, and that our vocal register involuntarily keeps the pitch within narrow limits; for in strengthening the resonance we instinctively choose the few notes that least strain and fatigue our voice; so that we spontaneously gravitate toward the side of monotony.* Tylor, on the other hand, supposes that the first exact scales were formed through the use of musical instruments: "One of the simplest scales was forced upon their attention by that early musical instrument, the trumpet, rude forms of which are seen in the long tubes of wood or bark blown by forest tribes in South America and Africa. A trumpet . . . will sound the successive notes of the 'common chord,' which may be written, *c*, *e*, *g*, *c*. . . . This natural scale, perfect so far as it goes, contains the most important of musical intervals, the octave, fifth, fourth, and third."† It is much to be regretted that our information concerning primitive instrumental music is so exceedingly meagre; nevertheless, we infer from the descriptions that the Bushmen, who use the most highly finished musical instruments, have also the best defined "intervals"—intervals which are not, however, identical with ours. Yet it should not be forgotten that Liechtenstein expressly remarks that the intervals which the Bushmen produce on their instruments are not peculiar to the respective instruments.

All that we have here adduced is only supposition; and it is doubtful whether we shall ever advance beyond supposition on this subject. Yet these suppositions are serviceable for making the earliest development of music more comprehensible to us. Darwin's hypothesis re-

* Gurney, p. 454. † Tylor, Anthropology, pp. 291, 292.

lates only to the development, not to the origin, of the active and passive musical faculty ; it sets forth the data as they are given, and attempts only to explain its conservation and growth. There is in the theory also, at least as we interpret it, no satisfactory conclusion concerning the peculiar effect of music. Darwin, indeed, believes that the characteristic property of musical effect, which he finds in the strength and indefiniteness of the feelings aroused, can be accounted for by the assumption that "from the deeply laid principle of inherited association, musical tones . . . would be likely to call up vaguely and indefinitely the strong emotions of a long-past age." Yet our ideas of the "deeply laid principle of inherited association" are so imperfect that we are obliged to admit that Darwin's explanation appears, for the present at least, quite as obscure as the question itself of the influence of music.

We have therefore no course left but to take this influence as it presents itself to us—as an emotional movement unique in its nature. "The first characteristic of music," says Gurney, "the alpha and omega of its effect, is this : it produces in us an emotional condition of great strength, which can not be given a place in any one class of our other emotional conditions. So far as it can be generally described, it is like a mingling of strong emotions which are changed into an entirely new experience, the individual elements of which we strive in vain to separate ; for exultation, tenderness, aspiration, pain and consolation, compliance and pressure—all seem to be in it at once. Yet the final result is not at all intricate or doubtful. Or it might be better to say that there are elements therein which we seek to explain through such relations, and which appear ill-defined

to our knowledge when we try to analyze them; while in reality beauty has that unity and individuality which are peculiar to clear and definite form. While we regard the essential effect of music as nothing more and nothing less than a musical effect, we would not thereby deny that music can in a certain degree express also extra-musical emotions and moods. It has a variety of means at its disposal for this. We insist here, however, only on that which comes particularly under our consideration in primitive music—rhythmical movement. Fechner has justly remarked that the determinations and relations of music by which kindred moods are aroused correspond in their most essential points with the mode of active expression of the same moods in the voices and movements of men as far as that is possible under the various adaptations of musical instruments and of human organization. Merry music has another *tempo*, another rhythm, from tragic music, and a similar contrast is shown between the suitable expressions of joy and sorrow in voice and motion." Although the mourning melodies of the Australians are slow and protracted, "when they sing in joy, anger, or hunger, they sing more rapidly the more impassioned they are, and with especial quickness in anger." * It is not necessary to suppose, Fechner continues, that in order to be thrown by music into any particular mood we must recollect a previous utterance of some expression of that mood; but the agreement of the moods that are struck seems to be based upon a unison of the emotional pulsations produced within us by the music with those that are naturally associated with our spon-

* Waitz-Gerland, vol. vi, p. 754.

taneous moods. And in conclusion he adds, "Since the active expression of our moods is not essentially melodious or harmonious, we have the less reason for making the impression of melody and harmony in music dependent on the recollection of such an expression." * Even in the most favourable cases the capacity of music for extra-musical expression is so limited that this art can not be compared in respect to that feature, even most remotely, with other arts, such as painting and sculpture, or poetry.† It is therefore a complete reversal to deduce the emotional effect of music, which is so powerful, from its capacity for expression, which is so slight. Yet if music can, even imperfectly, express extra-musical feelings, it can therefore excite extra-musical feelings. "It can," as Fechner says, "set in vibration the whole mental domain of man"; and thus it works at times deeply and widely upon his entire life. "It is said that the whole people in the time of the Reformation sang themselves into enthusiasm for the new faith; and that many who were hostile to Luther's name were converted to his doctrine by the irresistible charm of the simple and taking Protestant hymns"; as "the first conversions of some Slavic peo-

* Fechner, Vorschule der Aesthetik, vol. i, p. 176. The whole section—"The Direct Factor in Music"—is one of the clearest and most truthful that has ever been written on music.

† "I am inclined to think that such direct ethical influences as can be at all attributed to music in our experience are truly to be sought for rather in the indefinite than in the definite mode of impression. The suffused feeling which is perhaps best described as a 'sense of multitude' produced by vast masses of sonorous impression—especially in connection with actual delivery by a multitude, as in a great chorus—may involve true, though very vague and intangible, social associations." Gurney, p. 373.

ples were effected by means of the sacred melodies of the Byzantine Church." * Above all, music has the power of inflaming the martial spirit. Luther's powerful battle song, the melody of which strides along as if it were in harness, has often enough led the German regiments to attack and victory; and the dashing clangour of the Marseillaise called the citizens of the young French Republic to arms against half of Europe. No army has yet been able to dispense with martial music.

According to Darwin's theory, music was primarily cultivated as a means of sexual attraction. We should therefore expect to find it employed among the lowest peoples chiefly with reference to this object. The expectation, however, is not fulfilled. We at least have never succeeded in finding a single account authorizing the conclusion that music in any form plays a part in the lowest grades of culture in the intercourse of the sexes. On the other hand, the hunting tribes are fully as well acquainted as civilized nations with the martial value of music. The Australians inflame their courage by singing wild songs the night before a battle.† "Before the battle began," says Buckley, "a man came out in front of one of the parties and began to sing and dance." ‡ The battle also which Thomas witnessed was opened with a dance.‡ Yet the military significance of music in the lowest stages of culture is rather limited; for war ‖ does not play a particularly large part in the

* Gurney, p. 373. † Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 164.

‡ Brough Smyth, vol. i, p. 159. ‡ Ibid.

‖ Most of the Australian battles have rather a judicial than a political character; there are legally regulated expiatory combats. War is substantially unknown to the Eskimo.

life of the "savage" hunting tribes. Primitive music serves chiefly as an accompaniment to the dance. The drum and the singing give the dancers the time according to which they are to execute their movements. In this aspect a not inconsiderable share of the social influence which we have ascribed to the dance certainly belongs to music. It is worthy of remark, however, that the principal part in this influence has to be credited to rhythm, or the factor which is not specifically musical. Even in Grecian music, rhythm seems to have been predominant; and we can consequently understand why Plato attached so great importance to music in the education of the citizens of his ideal state.*

Still, in most cases where music appears independently, it probably produces no more and no less than a musical pleasure. The Bushman can listen alone for hours at a time to the sound of his *gora* without being concerned about anything but the succession of tones

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* "Next in order to harmonies, rhythms will naturally follow, and they should be subject to the same rules, for we ought not to have a complex or manifold system of metre, but rather to discover what rhythms are the expression of a courageous life; and the words should come first, and the rhythms should be adjusted to them, not the rhythms first and the words after them. To say what rhythms they are will be your business, as you have already taught me the harmonies.

"But, indeed, he replied, I can not tell you, I only know that there are some three principles of rhythm . . . out of which metrical systems are formed, just as in sound there are four elements into which the harmonies are resolved. That is an observation which I have made. Then, I said, we shall have to take Damon into our counsels, and he will tell us what rhythms are expressive of meanness, or impotence, or fury, or other unworthiness, and what there are expressive of opposite feelings." Plato, The Republic, vol. iii, p. 121 (Jowett).

which he brings out of it for his own pleasure. The Australians generally sing for themselves alone; and we really do not know of anything to justify us in supposing that they seek more from it than musical enjoyment.

While we are able in all other arts to show the existence of definite and appreciable relations between the artistic faculty and execution on the one side and other departments of æsthetical and cultural life on the other, no one has as yet found the solution of the problem as to music, although it has been often sought. "Any person," says Fechner, "though he may possess very little general culture, may receive higher and stronger direct musical impressions, may be able to understand music in its own sense better and receive more enjoyment from it, than the cultivated man, if he is more versed in the apprehension and following of musical relations, and has a larger native musical talent, notwithstanding he can associate little of consequence with it, and the other much; but the by-product of the music will be of more significance to the other." * Musical talent seems in fact to be consistent with every kind of mental endowment. It is not rarely found developed to a high degree in men who stand below the average in other respects, while it is sometimes wholly wanting in persons of very high intellectual and even artistic capacity. † The musical endowment of different peoples, too, appears to our view just as capricious and independent in its diversity as the same gift does in its individual manifestations. The Bushmen rise high above all the other hunting peoples in their musical

* Fechner, Vorschule, vol. i, p. 163.

† For example, Lessing, Kant, Maupassant.

capacity, and yet their civilization in other respects is quite as rude and meagre as that of any other. Even when we turn toward the higher stages of development the relation between civilization and music is no clearer. Why are the German people blessed with so wondrous abundance of the highest musical talent, while the nearly related English have not been able to present a single great master? Because the Germans are better endowed musically than the English, is the reply; but the question is precisely, Whence is that superiority derived? We shall not deny that a normal relation may exist between the musical gifts and the civilization of a people or an age, but we have to confess that we do not know what it is.

If the music of a people is independent of its civilization, so inversely the civilization of a people is essentially independent of its music. Even in the lowest stages of culture the indirect practical influence of music is far behind its immediate musical effect, and the onward course of development has constantly given a decided predominance to the latter. The more music has developed the specific musical element, harmony, the more musical its character has become, so much more exclusively musical has its effect also become. The very highest and purest form of music—Beethoven's instrumental music—is farthest from real life; it has neither a practical nor an ethical nor any other social significance, but nothing more and nothing less than an æsthetical, a musical one. Plato's assertion that music is a means of popular education has been repeated in our time. But music can, substantially, only educate to music. Whoever asks anything else from it only gives evidence that he is not able to appreciate what it offers him.

Music, therefore, stands thus in nature and influence unique among the arts, as an art of its own sort. All the other arts have to serve the purposes of life; music serves essentially the objects of art alone. In this sense music may be called the purest art, the art *κατ' ἐξοχην*. Especially between music and poetry, notwithstanding their close outward connection, there exists a deep inner contrast. Poetry is master of the whole world of phenomena; music, on the other hand, can say of itself, "My kingdom is not of this world."

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

We have rambled through the domain of primitive art like an explorer through a newly discovered country. We could find no plain, levelled road, but had to strike out a path for ourselves. We have encountered obstacles at every step. At more than one place the actual conditions presented themselves to us as intricate as one of those Australian thickets which can not be passed through, but must be gone around; in others we had to cross yawning chasms upon tottering, temporary bridges; on the whole of some wide domains we have not been able to cast a glance, because they lay concealed in impenetrable fogs; and frequently enough the mountain peaks which we thought we could see on the horizon were nothing but deceptive cloud-forms. The map which one brings back from such an expedition displays more blanks than inscribed spots, and we must content ourselves with the hope that what little knowledge we have gained may really be knowledge.

Before we began our study of primitive art we tried to set ourselves right concerning the nature of art in general. Our definition declared that effort to be artistic which is intended, either through its whole course or by its result, to arouse æsthetic feelings. Now, since

we have become acquainted with the artistic creations of hunting peoples, we must concede that this definition in its strict apprehension does not exactly fit the real conditions. Most of the artistic productions of the primitive peoples have not proceeded from purely æsthetic motives, but have been intended at the same time to serve some practical purpose, and frequently the latter appears as undoubtedly the prime motive, while the æsthetic demand is satisfied but secondarily. Primitive ornamentation, for example, was primarily and essentially devised and made, not as decoration, but as practically significant marks and symbols. In other cases, however, the æsthetic intent predominates; but it appears as the single motive, as a rule, only in music. Yet the higher peoples possess no special advantage in this respect over the hunting tribes. In their art, too, we find—aside from music and ornamentation—only rarely a work which engages and pursues exclusively æsthetic interests.

But while artistic effort in the lowest stages of culture hardly ever appears pure, it is still plainly recognisable everywhere—and in essentially the same forms as it is presented in the higher stages of culture. One art only have we failed to find among the primitive peoples; the irregular hunting life prevents the development of artistic architecture. The shelters, roofs, and huts with which the primitive peoples seek to protect themselves from the inclemency of the weather merely answer the most moderate practical requirements. All the other arts, on the contrary, which civilized nations practise are already familiar to the hunting tribes. Especially have we satisfied ourselves that the three principal kinds of poetry have not had to be

marked out in the course of the upward development of culture from some "undifferentiated primeval poetry," but that they are already present in independent individuality in the lowest stages.

The agreement between the artistic works of the rudest and of the most cultivated peoples is one not only in breadth but also in depth. Strange and inartistic as the primitive forms of art sometimes appear at the first sight, as soon as we examine them more closely, we find that they are formed according to the same laws as govern the highest creations of art. And not only are the great fundamental principles of eurhythm, symmetry, contrast, climax, and harmony practised by the Australians and the Eskimo as they were by the Athenians and the Florentines, but we have repeatedly determined—especially in regard to adornment of the body—that even those details which are commonly considered sports of arbitrary caprice, belong to the common æsthetic stock of the peoples most remote from civilization. This fact is certainly not without significance in æsthetics. Our investigation has proved what æsthetics has hitherto only asserted: that there are, for the human race at least, generally effective conditions for æsthetic pleasure, and consequently generally valid laws of artistic creation. As against this fundamental agreement, the differences between primitive and higher art forms appear to be more of a quantitative than a qualitative sort. The emotions represented in primitive art are narrow and rude, its materials are scanty, its forms are poor and coarse, but in its essential motives, means, and aims the art of the earliest times is at one with the art of all times.

In accordance with our appreciation of the task of

the science of art, we have not contented ourselves with investigating the peculiarity of primitive art, but have constantly endeavoured to discover the conditions on which it depends. The first prerequisite for artistic effect is an artistic impulse. In strictness there is, indeed, no one artistic impulse, as there is no one artistic activity. If we, nevertheless, use the expression, it is merely for the purpose of briefly and conveniently comprehending in it that which is common in the different special artistic tendencies, which alone interests us in these general conclusions.* This artistic tendency, which is substantially identical with the play impulse—that is, with the tendency to an extreme, purposeless, and therefore æsthetic occupation of corporeal and spiritual powers,† and which is more or less combined in various forms with the propensity to imitation ‡—is

* We do not in any sense assert the existence of any one artistic tendency, but rather deny it as explicitly as possible. It is a mistake to believe that substantially the same artistic tendency is operative in every individual endowed with a faculty for art, and that it only depends upon suitable outward conditions whether it becomes efficient in musical, poetical, or pictorial forms. An artistic tendency exists only in words; in reality there are simply poetical, pictorial, musical, or architectural tendencies. These different tendencies, feelings, and activities exist together with equal title and independently of one another. A musician has not a general artistic tendency which he satisfies by means of musical forms, but he lives, feels, and acts from the beginning musically in feelings which are entirely foreign to the other fields of life and art.

† The analysis of the artistic impulse is not within our present purpose. It belongs to the psychological part of the science of art. Concerning the play impulse and its significance for art, see Herbert Spencer's excellent observations, Principles of Psychology, vol. ii, pp. 646–648.

‡ The propensity to imitation plays no part, or an entirely subsidiary one only, in music.

without doubt a general possession of mankind which is probably far older than human nature itself. The artistic tendency thus did not have to wait to be brought forth by means of special cultural conditions, but is developed and led in any particular way by such conditions.

The artistic productions of the several hunting tribes are marked by an extreme uniformity; in cosmetic art, in ornamentation, in representative art, in gymnastics, in poetry, and even in music, everywhere among each individual people, the same characteristic traits meet us again and again that we have found among all the others. This all-pervading uniformity proves directly that the character of the race has no decisive significance in the development of art. The unity of primitive art stands in the sharpest contrast to the diversity of primitive races. The Australian and the Eskimo are as unlike one another, from an anthropological point of view, as two human races can be; and yet the ornaments of the one are frequently so similar to those of the other that it would sometimes be very hard to determine the origin of a particular pattern if we did not find a clew in the form and material of the decorated object. One who has ever compared the rock drawings of the Australians and Bushmen, and then the Australians and Bushmen themselves, will hardly venture to maintain Taine's theory that the art of a people is, first of all, the expression of its racial character; at least not as having the universal validity that Taine claims for it. Yet we would not deny that race character exerts an influence over the development of art, although we have not been able to exactly define it. We only say—supported by the re-

sults of our researches—that this influence is not, in the lowest stages of culture, decisive as to the essential character of art, but plays at most a very subordinate part in the determination. Only in the development of a single art—that of music—is it possibly of greater significance; but our knowlege of primitive music is too meagre to enable us to prove this. We are equally unable to answer the question here, whether the influence of race character on art does not increase with the advancing development of culture and art. When we consider that the individuality of peoples as well as of men comes out with constantly increasing force during the course of their development, we are inclined in fact to admit that possibility. On the other hand, we should not forget that the higher peoples have a far less pure and simple race character than the lower tribes.

The uniform character of primitive art points indubitably to a uniform cause; and we have found this uniform cause in that factor of civilization which possesses a wholly uniform character among the hunting tribes of all races and zones, and which at the same time exercises the strongest influence among all peoples on the other departments of cultural life—the method of securing food. We were, however, not yet able to follow out clearly the relations between the forms of primitive production and the forms of primitive art in all cases and on all sides; yet we succeeded in making clear the significance of hunting life in the beginnings of art in general. It is in fact so great that one is obliged to remark it. With the exception of music, which holds a special position from the very beginning, all the arts in the lowest stage of culture reveal imme-

diately, in matter and form, the decisive influence which the rude and unsettled hunter's life has directly or indirectly exercised upon them. We can demonstrate this influence in no art with so great definiteness as in painting and sculpture; the lifelike pictorial and sculptured representations of men and beasts, by which the hunting peoples are distinguished, present themselves to us very comprehensibly as æsthetic achievements of faculties which the struggle for existence necessarily develops to high perfection among hunting peoples in particular.

The form of production of a people depends primarily upon the geographical and meteorological conditions under which it lives. The hunting peoples have remained hunting peoples, not, as the older ethnologists believed, because they were condemned by a defective capacity to be stationary from the beginning, but because the character of their homes prevented their advance to a higher form of production. In this way our researches, which were limited to the art of the lowest stages of culture, have opened for us a view into the much-discussed question of the relation of art and climate, which the speculations of the æsthetes who confined themselves to the arts of the higher stages of culture have only obscured. The influences of climate which we have recognised in the art of the hunting tribes are, however, of a very different sort from those which Herder and Taine thought they discovered in the art of the higher peoples. Herder and Taine assumed a direct influence of climate on the spirit of the peoples and the character of their art; the influence which we have traced is, on the other hand, indirect: climate rules art through production. We do not,

however, claim that we have discovered in this a universally valid law of the science of art. It appears to us at least very doubtful whether such an influence of climate can be proved even on the art of the higher peoples; not because the conditions among them are disproportionately more complicated, but because peoples armed with richer cultural means have made themselves more independent of the influences of climate in their production. Advance in culture leads peoples out of servitude under Nature to mastery over Nature; and it may be presumed that this change finds a corresponding expression in the development of art.

There is no people without art. We have seen that even the rudest and most miserable tribes devote a large part of their time and strength to art—art, which is looked down upon and treated by civilized nations, from the height of their practical and scientific achievements, more and more as idle play. And yet it seems wholly inconceivable, from the point of view of modern science, that a function to which so great a mass of energy is applied should be of no consequence in the maintenance and the development of the social organism; for if the energy which man devotes to æsthetic creation and enjoyments were lost in the earnest and essential tasks of life, if art were indeed only idle play, then natural selection should have long ago rejected the peoples which wasted their force in so purposeless a way, in favour of other peoples of practical talents; and art could not possibly have been developed so highly and richly as it has been. We have therefore been convinced from the first that primitive art, besides its immediate æsthetic significance, possesses also a practical importance to the hunting peoples, and the

results of our research have confirmed this conviction. The primitive arts affect primitive life in diversified ways. Ornamentation, for example, pre-eminently promotes technical skill. Personal adornment and the dance play an important part in the intercourse of the sexes, and by means of their influence on sexual selection they have probably, as we have shown in the appropriate place, contributed to the improvement of the race. On the other side, personal decoration rises, because it frightens the enemy; poetry, the dance, and music, because they inflame and inspire the warriors, the bulwarks of the social groups against hostile assaults. But the most efficient and most beneficent effect which art exercises over the life of peoples consists in the strengthening and extension of the social bonds to which it contributes. Not all the arts are equally adapted for this effect. While the dance and poetry seem to be predestined for it by their essential property, music is for the same reason almost entirely excluded from it. Besides these inner reasons, outward circumstances also have a part in deciding by which art the socializing function shall be predominantly exercised among a given people at a given epoch. The dance, for instance, loses its influence as soon as the social groups become too large to unite in a single dance; and, on the other side, poetry owes its present incomparable power to the invention of printing. Consequently the hegemony passes, in the onward course of the development of civilization, from one art to another. We recognise the most powerful social influence among the hunting peoples as vested in the dance; to the Greeks, sculpture incorporated the social ideal in its most effective form; in the middle ages, architecture

united bodies and souls in the halls of its gigantic cathedrals; in the Renascence, painting spoke a language that was understood by all the cultivated peoples of Europe; and in the modern age the soothing voice of poetry resounds mightily over the clash of arms of hostile conditions and peoples. But although the social significance of individual arts has thus changed in the course of ages, the social significance of art has continuously increased. The educational influence which it has exercised on the rudest tribes has steadily broadened and risen. While the highest social function of primitive art consisted in unification, civilized art, with its richer and more individually executed works, serves not for unification only, but primarily for the elevation of the spirit. As science enriches and elevates our intellectual life, so art enriches and elevates our emotional life. Art and science are the two most powerful means for the education of the human race. Thus art is no idle play, but an indispensable social function, one of the most efficient weapons in the struggle for existence; and consequently it is destined to be even more and more richly and powerfully developed by means of the struggle for existence; for while artistic activities were exercised by the peoples first for the sake only of their immediate æsthetic value, they have been kept up and developed through history mainly on account of their indirect social value. A consciousness of the importance of art to social welfare has, moreover, existed in man in all ages. We could invoke a long array of philosophers, artists, and statesmen who have pointed out in clear words that art serves or has served for the education of the peoples. We have in fact a right to demand of art that it work in the direction of a social

purpose—that is, morally; for art is a social function; and every social function should serve for the maintenance and development of the social organism. But we are wrong when we require it to be moral, or, more correctly, moralizing, for with that requirement we demand nothing more or less than that art be no longer art, while art best serves social interests when it serves artistic interests.

While we have limited our researches to primitive art, we have at the same time confined ourselves to one side of the work of the science of art, which we designated at the outset as the sociological side. In the lowest stage of culture art appears simply, at least to us, as a social phenomenon; we have therefore to content ourselves with the investigation of its social conditions and influences, not because we would not recognise any other, but because, under these circumstances, we consider we could not distinguish any other. In the higher stages of civilization, however, besides the influence which art exercises on social life, its value in the development of individual life comes forth even more clearly; yes, the very highest creations of the highest artistic genius, which rise far up above the average of the great multitude, are primarily generally capable of only an individual influence. This last circumstance advises us indeed that the individual and individualizing influence of art is not less to be esteemed than the social and socializing influence which we have endeavoured to appreciate. To us who live in the conviction that all social development is only a means for the furtherance of individual development, it stands incomparably higher. If we should undertake to show in what the significance of art for individual develop-

ment consists, we should have to institute a research which would probably be longer and more difficult than the one we have concluded. But it is enough if we point out that in this respect, too, art is not merely a pleasant pastime, but that it contributes to the fulfilment of the highest and most earnest purposes of life. Yet, or rather on account of this, there is a profound contrast between the individual and the social function of art. While social art binds the individual man ever more firmly and intimately with the social whole, individual art frees man by developing his individuality from the bonds of social connection. The art of Plato, teacher of the peoples, is the opposite of the art of Schopenhauer, deliverer of men.

INDEX.

Adornment, importance of, 313.

Æsthetic character, of colours, red, 61; yellow, 63; white, 64; of the dance, 222.

Æsthetic ideas, in body painting, 60; in the dance, 227, 231; in dress, 103 *et seq.*; in dressing of the hair, 85; in dressing of the loins, 94, 100; in European art, 27; in handwriting, 146; in Japanese art, 28; in making of implements, 115; in nose ornaments, 84; in primitive art, 24; in primitive ornaments, 108; in rhythmic arrangement in ornamentation, 151; in scarification, 72; in tattooing, 80; in wearing lip and ear plugs, 82; æsthetic pleasure, conditions for, 148; purpose, in poetry, 234 *et seq.*; purpose in primitive art, 204; significance of bodily decoration, 60, 72, 81.

Æsthetics, 48; tasks of, 147, 148.

Agricultural peoples, form of the family among, 38; art among, 198.

Alaska, women of, 99.

Aleuts, culture of, 44; dramas of, 267 *et seq.*; drawings of, 185, 186; masks of, 192.

Americans, body painting among, 67.

Andamanese (*see* Mincopies).

Andaman Islanders (*see* Mincopies).

Andree, on Australian cave paintings, footnote, 166; on drawings of Bushmen, 183.

Angas, on the Australians, 55; quoted on Australian carvings, 172 *et seq.*

Anthropology, physical, 34.

Animal forms, in ornamentation, 118 *et seq.*

Animal motives in decoration, 156.

Arabs, position in the scale of culture, 33.

Arbousset and Daumas, quoted on a Bushman dance, 215 *et seq*

Archæology, importance to the study of art, 21.

Architecture, among the Eskimo, 45; artistic, 306; social influence of, 313 *et seq.*

Aristotle, on tragedy, 224.

Armstrong, on tattooing, 80.

Art, aim of the science of, 1 *et seq.*; a social phenomenon, 50; nature of, 47 *et seq.*; connection with climate, 311; with form of production, 310 *et seq.*; with religion, 199 *et seq.*; definition of, 305 *et seq.*; influence of race on, 309; universality of, 312.

Arts, classification of the, 51; nature of the, 48.

Athenians, art of, 307.

Australians, 53; footnote, 43; admiration for scars among, 78; art of, 28,

194, 307, 309; battle songs of, 300; body painting among, 55 *et seq.*; boomerang of, 45; characters of, 195, 196; colours used by, 62; footnote, ibid., 64, 133; clubs and shields, 23; culture of, 42; dancers, 101; dances of, 208 *et seq.*, 218 *et seq.*, 226, 229, 230; decoration with flowers by, footnote, 156; dramas of, 267 *et seq.*; drawings of, 125, 165 *et seq.*, 185, 187, 189; epic poems of, 250; grade of culture of, 44; hair-dressing among, 87; headdresses of, 88, 89; illustrations of shields of, 122, 124; industries of, 35; inscriptions of, 135; lack of clothing among, 96; languages, hindrance to spread of poetry, 274; loins, dress of, 94, 107; love songs of, 244, 245; lyrics of, 236 *et seq.*; magic sticks of, 142; maps made by, 126; marks on weapons among, 137, 139; message stick of, 134; mourning colours used by, 66; mourning melodies of, 298; mourning patterns among, 69; musical instruments of, 288; music of, 278 *et seq.*, 284, 292, 302; neck bands of, 104; necklace of, 109; neck ornaments worn by, 92; nose ornaments worn by, 83; ornamentation among, 116, 118, 123, 157, footnote, 159; ornamentation, technic motives in, 132; ornamented spears of, 144; paintings and carvings, 165 *et seq.*; pictures of, 202; pleasure in imitating among, 223; poetry of, 22, 29, 232, 243; poets of, 277; position in the scale of culture, 33; poverty of decorative art among, 155; purpose of decoration among, 111; rhythmic series of, 150, 151; rock drawings of, 199; shields of, 161; scarification among, 70, 75, footnote, *ibid.* 76; significance of scarification among, 72; social distinctions among, 112, 114; songs of, 248, 276; stories of, 253, 255, 257, 259; symmetry of ornamentation among, 152 *et seq.*; wearing of clothing in dances by, 98; weapons of, 197.

Baines, on a Bushman headdress, 90; quoted on Bushman perspective, footnote, 184.

Bakairi, ornamentation among, 119.

Bakuba, scarification among, 78.

Baluba, scarification among, 78.

Bancroft, on lip piercing among the Eskimo, 83; on Eskimo dancers, 218.

Bantu, artistic ability of, 198.

Barlow, quoted on Australian songs, 249.

Barrow, quoted on the Bushmen, 94.

Bastian, on Northwest coast Indians, 190.

Beckler, on music of the Australians, 284 *et seq.*

Beethoven, music of, 303.

Black, a colour used in decoration, 133.

Bleek on Bushman language, 274 *et seq.*

Blue, a colour used in decoration, 133.

Boas, Franz, on the central Eskimo, 29, 102, 186; on Eskimo music, 286; on numbers of the Eskimo, footnote, 230; on tattooing among the Eskimo, 79; quoted on the Eskimo, 86; on Eskimo dances, 217; on Eskimo poetry, footnote, 250; on Eskimo songs, 240, 247; on Eskimo stories, 266.

Boccaccio's Decameron quoted, footnote, 248.

Body painting, for æsthetic purposes, 60 *et seq*; patterns used in, 68.

Boers, 183.
Bonwick, on the Tasmanians, 71; quoted on the Tasmanians, 111.
Botany Bay, 174.
Botocudo, 53, footnote, 44; body painting among, 60, 64; culture of, 44; dances of, 216; Ehrenreeich, quoted on, 93; feathers worn by, 104; hair-dressing among, 85; headdresses of, 89, 90; lack of clothing among, 96; lack of pictorial art among, 193; lip and ear plugs worn by, 81; love songs of, 244, 245; musical instruments of, 288; music of, 278, 283; necklace of, 107; ornaments worn by, 92; patterns used in body painting, 68, 69; poetry of, 232, 241, 243; songs of, 236; wind instruments of, 290.
Boucher de Perthes, 163.
Bove, G., on the Fuegians, 59; footnote, 110.
Brazil, Indians of, 41; ornamentation among, 119.
Brehm, quoted on song of a gibbon, footnote, 294.
Brown, quoted on primitive music, 286.
Buckley, quoted on Australians, 300.
Bugi alphabet, 170.
Bulmer, on Australian ornamentation, 123; on the Australians, 111; quoted on Australian dancers, 65; on the Australians, 95.
Burchell, quoted on a Bushman dance, 213 *et seq.*
Büttner, quoted on drawings of Bushmen, 184.
Buris, 170.
Bushmen, 53; art of, 28, 194, 309; beads worn by, 104; body painting among, 59; characters of, 195, 196; colours used by, 64; culture of, 33, 44; dances of, 213 *et seq.*; decoration with flowers by, footnote, 156; drawings among, 121, 185, 187, 189; earrings worn by, 83; epic poems of, 250; fashions among, 114; hair-dressing among, 87; headdresses of, 89, 90; lack of ornamentation of implements among, 115; lack of social organization among, 112; language of, 274; leg bands worn by, 101; loins, dress of, 94; music of, 278, 286 *et seq.*, 296, 301, 302; musical instruments of, 289 *et seq.*; neck ornaments worn by, 91; ornaments of, 103; paintings and carvings of, 180 *et seq.*; pictures of, 202; pleasure in imitating among, 223; poetry of, 232; poisoned arrows of, 45, 197; stories of, 253, 255, 257 *et seq.*, 266; tattooing among, 78, 79; use of birds' heads as ornaments, 105; weapons of, 197.

Calder, quoted on Tasmanians, 178.
Canoe dance, 220.
Cape York, 172.
Carpentaria, Gulf of, 172.
Carvings, of northern peoples, 187 *et seq.*; in Australia, 172; in France, 163 *et seq.*
Cassinauhe, 121.
Ceramics, among the Mincopies, 45.
Chasm Island, 172.
Chauncy, quoted on the Australians, 123, 180.
Chinese bronzes, 157; writing, footnote, 147.
Choris, illustrations of Aleut paddles, 138; on Aleut drawings, footnote, 185; quoted on an Aleut pantomime, 268.
Clack's Island, 172.
Climate, as affecting art, 14; relation to art, 311.
Collins on the Australians, 139; quoted on the Australians, 195.

Colour of the skin, influence of, on colours used in painting, 64; on scarification and tattooing, 69, 78.
Colours used in body painting, 55 *et seq.*; used in ornamentation, 132 *et seq.*; used in paintings, 169, 178, 181.
Cook, on the Tasmanians, 71; quoted on the Fuegians, 53, 59; on tribes of Prince William Sound, 197.
Corroborry, 49, 56, 65, 90, 95, 101, 125, footnote, 165, 171, 173, 175, 176, 202, 218, 229, 278, 285, 292; description of a, 208 *et seq.*
Cranz, quoted on the Greenlanders, 200; on tattooing among the Eskimo, 80.
Culture, difficult to define, 35; knowledge of, important to study of art, 29; relation to the dance, 227 *et seq.*; relation to ornamentation, 155; relation to production, 35 *et seq.*
Curr, on scarification in Australia, footnote, 75.

Dall, quoted on the Aleuts, 192.
Dance, a living sculpture, 51; of hunting peoples, 228; importance of the, 313; importance to culture, 227 *et seq.*; pleasure in the, 221 *et seq.*, 225; relation to music, 278, 301; religious significance of, 225 *et seq.*; social influence of the, 313; the modern, 228; varieties of the, 207.
Darwin, 53; on music, 293 *et seq.*; quoted on rhythm, footnote, 222.
Decoration, personal, 51, 53 *et seq.*; by body ornaments, 90 *et seq.*; by hair-dressing, 85 *et seq.*; by head-dresses, 88 *et seq.*; by lip and ear plugs, 81 *et seq.*; by painting, 55 *et seq.*; by scarification, 69 *et seq.*; by tattooing, 78 *et seq.*; forms of, 54; purpose of, 109 *et seq.*; of implements, 51; of the limbs, 100 *et seq.*; social, 102.
Degeneration of peoples, theory of, 40.
Depuch Island, 170.
Division of labour, 37.
Dordogne, grottos of, 163.
Drachenberg, 181.
Drama, 265; developed from the dance, 225; relation to duet and mimic dance, 267.
Dress, origin of, 96 *et seq.*
Dubos, Abbé, on causes of artistic talents, 12; on ethnological method in study of art, 19; quoted on music, 280.
Dyaks of Borneo, plant ornament among, 157; shields of, 161.
Dyeri, footnote, 66; colours used by, 63; loins dress of, 95; mourning colours among, 57.

Earrings worn by cultivated peoples, 108.
Egypt, plant ornaments in, 157.
Egyptian art, analogies to Australian, 200; compared with Australian, 179.
Ehrenreich, on Botocudo songs, 235 *et seq.*; on conventionalized drawings, 124; on the Karaya, 121; quoted on Botocudo dances, 216 *et seq*; on Brazilian tribes, 119; on the Botocudo, 93, 278.
Epic poetry, 250; of civilized peoples, 256; primitive, characteristics of, 255.
Eskimo, animal ornaments of, 142; art of, 194, 200, 201, 307, 309; carvings of, 187 *et seq.*; characters of, 195, 196; clothing of, 101; colours used in ornamentation by, 133; culture of, 44; custom of painting wanting among, 55; masks of, 189

et seq.; dances of, 217 *et seq.*; dramas of, 268; drawings among, 121, 185, 186; drum of, 289; dwellings of, 45; folk-tales of, 251; hair-dressing among, 86; harpoon of, 45; headband not found among, 88; illustrations of implements of, 127–130; inscriptions of, 135; lack of social distinctions among, 112; lamp of, 116; languages of, 275; lip plugs of, 82, 104; love songs of, 244; magical signs of, 143; maps made by, 126; music of, 278 *et seq.*, 286; origin of ornamentation of, 128 *et seq.*; numbers of, footnote, 230; ornamentation among, 116, 144; ornamentation from textile patterns, 157; ornaments of, 101; perspective, 187; poetry of, 232; property marks of, 137; rhythmic series of, 150, 151; songs of, 240 *et seq.*, 247, 250, 276; stories of, 255, 257, 259, 266; tales and traditions of, 29; tattooing among, 78, 79, 80; weapons of, 197, 198.

Ethnological method difficulties in the application of, 22.

Ethnology, 194, 199; importance to science of art, 19 *et seq.*, 32.

Eyre, Australian songs from, 237; on Australian dances, 219; quoted on an Australian dance, 222, 226 *et seq.*; on Australian songs, 249; on corroborries, 211.

Family, as showing relation of production to culture, 36 *et seq.*; matriarchal form, 38; patriarchal form, 37.

Farini, on tattooing among the Bushmen, 79.

Fashions, change of, 102; constancy of, 102, 113.

Feathers as ornaments, 104.

Fechner, quoted on æsthetics, 147; on music, 298 *et seq.*, 302; on the arts, 51.

Fijian hair-dressing, 88.

Fiji Islands, footnote, 43.

Florentines, art of, 307.

Forestier Islands, 170.

Freycinet, on melodies from New Holland, 285 *et seq.*

Fritsch, on ornaments worn by Bushmen, 91; on primitive pictorial art, 198; on the Bushmen, 87; quoted on Bushmen, 181, 196.

Frobisher, on the Nugumint, footnote, 86.

Fuegians, footnote, 43; baskets of, 116; body painting among, 59; colours used by, 64; culture of, 44; dances of, 216; decoration among, 53, footnote, 110, 115; dramas of, 268; hair-dressing among, 87; headdresses of, 89, 90; lack of clothing among, 96; lack of pictorial art among, 193; lack of social organization among, 112; lip and ear plugs not found among, 81, 83; loins dress not worn by, 93; neck ornaments worn by, 91; ornaments of, 103; pleasure in imitating among, 224; poetry of, 232; use of shell ornaments by, 105.

Geometrical patterns governed by the material, 159.

Gerland, on Australian songs, footnote, 236; on the Australians, 42; on the dance, 227; on scarification, 77; quoted on paintings at Upper Glenelg, 169, 170; on the Australians, 139.

"Gestoppte Fontein," 181.

Goethe, handwriting of, 146; on poetry, 232, footnote, 234; quotation from, 246 *et seq.*; quoted on colours, footnote, 61.

Gora, a Bushman musical instrument, 287, 290, 291, 301.
Graphic art, study of, 23.
Greenlanders, drama among, 267.
Grey, George, on Australian songs, 247, footnote, 236, 239; on paintings at Upper Glenely, 165 *et seq.*; on religious significance of pictures, 199; quoted on Australian songs, 236.
Guyau, art from the sociological point of view, 19; contribution to science of art, 17.
Gurney, on music, 280, 295 *et seq.*; on rhythm, 223; the power of sound, footnote, 149; quoted on music, 292, 297 *et seq.*, footnote, 299.
Gymnastic dances, 207; of Australians, 208; of Mincopies, 211; of Bushmen, 213; of Eskimo, 217 *et seq.*

Hahn, Theophilus, on a musical instrument, footnote, 290; quoted on Bushman art, 200; on the Bushmen, 286.
Hair-dressing as a tribal mark, 85; forms of, 85 *et seq.*
Haussa negro, carvings of, 25.
Headdresses, 88 *et seq.*
Hennequin, quotations from La Critique scientifique, 14 *et seq.*
Heraldic figures in Australia, 140.
Herder, ethnological method in study of art, 19; on climate and art, 311; on influence of climate upon poetry, 12.
Herders, art among, 198.
Hildebrand, on Tchuktchis carvings, 200; quoted on Eskimo drawings, footnote, 185, 186.
History of art, 1 *et seq.*
History, value to science of art, 21, 32.
Hodgkinson, on the Australians, 55; quoted on Australian dances, 220.
Holmes, W. H., on geometrical figures, 121; on Indian pottery, 143.
Honery, quoted on the Australians, 137.
Hopetown, 181.
Hottentots, 286, footnotes, 43, 60; gourd harp of, 290; language of, 275; music of, 295.
Howitt, quoted on the Australians, 69.
Hunting peoples, belief in spirits among, 36; culture of, 40; dances of, 228; development of, 43; pictorial art among, 193, 195; present locations of, 44; primitive art of, 43; social organization among, 45; weapons of, 197.
Hutchinson, quoted on Bushman perspective, 184.
Hyperboreans, picture writings of, 203, 204.

Iglulirmiut, footnote, 86.
Indians, North American, footnote, 43; Paraguay, ibid.
Inscriptions of Australians, 135, 154; of Eskimo, 135, 136.

Jacobsen, 190; on the Eskimo, 201.
Joest, quoted on painting in mourning, 67.
Japanese opinion of European art, 27; tattooing among, 79; unsymmetrical decorations of, footnote, 153; writing of, 147.

Kaaro, an Australian dance, 220.
Kaffirs, 91, 183; belief in spirits among, 36; fashions among, 113; pictures of, 202.
Kagsagsuk, story of, 260 *et seq.*, 276.
Kalahari Desert, 33, 44, 53.
Kane, quoted on the hyperboreans, 196.

Karaya, illustration of ornaments of, 119; lack of drawings among, 121; ornaments of, 120.
Kaross worn by Bushmen, 91.
Kayak, 186.
Kettledrum, 288.
Keypoort, 182.
King George's Sound, 57, 246.
Kinipetu, footnote, 86.
Kobong, 139–141.
Kosé mo Kanaoka, Japanese painter, footnote, 147.

La Pérouse, quoted on women of Alaska, 99.
Lake Tyrrell, 174.
Lane Cove, 173.
Lane Fox, instructions for travellers, 30; on conventionalized drawings, 122.
Lang, quoted on an Australian drama, 268 *et seq.*
Laugerie Basse, footnote, 164.
Law of copy, 144.
Le Souëff, Albert, quoted on the Australians, 180.
Levaillant, quoted on Bushman music, 291.
Liechtenstein, quoted on Bushmen music, 287 *et seq.*, 296.
Limbs, decoration of, 100 *et seq.*
Lippert, quoted on wearing of ornaments, 84.
Lip plugs, worn by Botocudo, 81; by Eskimo, 82.
Loins dress, 93; significance of, 96.
Love dances, 220.
Love, ideas of, 244 *et seq.*
Lumholtz, on dancing festivals, 230; on the Queenslanders, 67, 87, footnote, 110; quoted on Australian dances, footnote, 229; on musical instruments, 289; on the Queenslanders, 56, 70, 76, 284.
Lubbock, Sir John, footnote, 43.
Lyrics, Australian, 236 *et seq.*

Macassar alphabet, 170.
Magic sticks of the Australians, 142.
Malays, supposed artists at Upper Glenelg, 168.
Mallery, Garrick, on North American pictographs, 203; illustration from, 202; quoted on North American pictographs, footnote, 203.
Man, E. H., on dances of the Mincopies, 212 *et seq.*; on numbers of Mincopies, footnote, 230; on scarification, 71; on songs of the Mincopies, 28; on the Mincopies, 77, 86, 92, 94, 98, 127, 230, 283 *et seq.*; quoted on the Mincopies, 28, 58, 73, 112, 240, 249, 251, 254.
Maori, drawings of the, 25, footnote, 43.
Marriage, human, history of, footnote, 44.
Martius, quoted on Indians of Brazil, 41.
Mas d'Azil, grotto of, footnote, 164.
Masks of the Aleuts, 192; of Eskimo, 189 *et seq.*
Massinger, Philip, 10.
Matriarchal form of family, 38.
Melanesians, inventors of the wooden drum, 289; ornamentation of, footnote, 158.
Message sticks, from Australia, 134, 202.
Meyer, H. E., on the Australians, 56.
Miams, 211.
Michaelangelo, 171.
Military organization, development of, 39.
Mill, on poetry, 49, 247.
Mimetic dances, 207; of Australians, 218 *et seq.*; of Eskimo, 218–220; of Bushmen, 223.

Mimicry, 223 *et seq.*
Mincopies, body painting among, 57; ceramics among, 45; clothing of, 53: colours used in ornamentation by, 58, 63, 64, 133; culture of, 44; footnote, 43; dances of, 211 *et seq.*, 230; drum of, 289; epic poems of, 250; girdles worn by, 94, 149; hair-dressing among, 85; head-dresses of, 88; illustrations of ornaments of, 126; lack of pictorial art among, 193; language of, 274; lip, nose, and ear plugs not found among, 83; love songs of, 244, 245; lyrics of, 240; mourning painting among, 66, music of, 283; numbers of, footnote, 230; origin of ornamental designs of, 127 *et seq.*, 130 *et seq.*; origin of scarification among, 73; ornaments worn by, 92, 142; ornamentation among, 116; ornamentation of weapons among, 126; painting among, 66; poetry of, 28, 232; pottery decorations of, 143, 158; poverty of decorative art among, 155; property marks of, 138: rhythmic series of, 150, 151; scarification among, 71, 72, 75, 77, 78; social distinctions among, 112; songs of, 22, 249, 278 *et seq.*; stories of, 251 *et seq.*, 254, 255; symmetrical ornamentation among, 154; use of shell ornaments by, 105; wearing of clothing in dances by, 98.
Mindi, an Australian demon, 226.
Mitchell, on an Australian headdress, 89.
Modesty, influence of, in clothing, 99, 100; origin of, 93 *et seq.*, 97 *et seq.*
Mokoma, 216.
Mooroops, 178.
Moorunde, natives of, 56, 226.
Mourning, cause of painting in, 67; colours used in, 57, 66.
Mundy, on Australian dances, 219.
Museum für Völkerkunde, 25.
Music, footnote, 280; connection of, with poetry and the dance, 278; in flueuce of, 297 *et seq.*; origin of, 279 *et seq.*; primitive, characteristics of, 291 *et seq*; primitive, importance of study of, 281 *et seq.*; relation to civilization, 302 *et seq.*; significance of, 303 *et seq.*

Narrinyeri, an Australian tribe, 56, 236, 237; headdresses of, footnote, 88.
Natural selection, development of art by, 15 *et seq.*
Nature, in primitive poetry, 245, 257.
Naturvölker, 33.
Neck ornaments, 90 *et seq.*
Netchiilirmiut, footnote, 86.
New Britain, people of, footnote, 44; drawings of, 123.
New Zealanders, æsthetic endowment of, 24 *et seq.*
Northwestern Indians, 190.
Norwegian sagas, 265.
Nugumint, footnote, 86.

Ono no Tofu, Japanese writing-master, footnote, 147.
Oogee, Australian headdress, 90; footnote, 165.
Ornamentation, among Americans, 162; among Polynesians, 162; importance of, 313; of implements, 115 *et seq.*; origin of, 118 *et seq.*, 133; among the Australians, 139 *et seq.*; origin of, among the Eskimo, 128 *et seq.*; relation to culture, 155, 160; to material used, 158; to occupation, 155.
Ornamentation of weapons, importance of, for recognition marks, 161; in social distinctions, 161; in wooing, 160.

Ornaments, civilized, derived from primitive, 108 *et seq.*

Painting, social influence of, 314; the body, 54 *et seq.*
Paintings, Australian, 165 *et seq.*, 172 *et seq.*; Bushman, 180 *et seq.*
Palmer, on scarification, footnote, 75.
Palti, an Australian dance, 56.
Papuan canoes, birds' heads on, 24.
Parker, quoted on an Australian dance, 221, 226.
Pastoral peoples, form of family among, 38.
Patagonians, footnote, 43.
Patriarchal form of family, 37.
Patterns used in body painting, 68.
Perspective, 179, 184, 187, 193.
Peruvians, an agricultural people, 35.
Philosophy of art, 1 *et seq.*
Pictorial art, among the Australians, 165 *et seq.*; the Botocudo, 193; the Bushmen, 180 *et seq.*; the Fuegians, 193; the Mincopies, 193; northern peoples, 185 *et seq.*; characteristics of primitive, 193; connection with occupation, 195, 198; naturalistic basis of, 190, 193; primitive, compared with that of children, 193 *et seq.*; social influence of, 205.
Picture-writing, 145 *et seq.*, 201 *et seq.*
Pideku, an Australian dance, 56.
Plato, art of, 316; on music, 303; The Republic, quoted, footnote, 301.
Play, distinguished from practical and æsthetic activity, 49.
Poetry, among primitive peoples, 28, 232; connection with drama, 265 *et seq.*; definition of, 234; importance of, in civilized life, 270 *et seq.*; importance to hunting peoples, 274 *et seq.*; lyric, 234 *et seq.*: Mill on, 49; primitive and civilized compared, 243, 244; social influence of, 314.
Polynesians, position in the scale of culture, 33.
Port Aiken, 173.
Port Jackson, 172, 174.
Port Piper, 173.
Port Stephen, 173.
Pottery, 143.
Primitive art, importance of the study of, 21.
Primitive music, 22.
Primitive peoples, art of, 306, 309; defined, 40; need of defining term, 32.
Prince William Sound, 197.
Production, form of, as controlling culture, 36 *et seq.*; influencing art, 40.
Property marks on weapons, individual, 136 *et seq.*; social, 139.
Puluga, a Mincopy god, 252, 254.

Queensland, boomerang from, 135; shield from, 133; illustration, 122.
Queenslanders, footnote, 44; decoration among, 56, footnote, 110; Lumholtz on the, 67, 87; Lumholtz on scarification among, 76; music of, 284; ornaments worn by, 93; scarification among, 70; sounding stick of, 289.

Race character, influence of, on form of culture, 34.
Raphael, 171.
Raratonga-Tubuai peoples, geometrical ornamentation among, 122.
Ratzel, on headdresses, 90; on neck ornaments, 91; quoted on Bushman stories, 258, 266; use of term "Naturvölker," 33.
Red, a colour used in body painting, 61 *et seq.*; used in decoration, 133.
Reindeer period, 163, 164, 194, 199.
Religious ideas, influenced by economic conditions, 36.

Religious significance, of ornamentation, 142; of pictures, 199 *et seq.*, 204; of scarification, 72, 80; of the dance, 225 *et seq.*
Rembrandt, 10, 27.
Resurrection dance, 221.
Rink, on the Eskimo, 244; quoted on Eskimo stories, 255 *et seq.*, 259 *et seq.*; on the Eskimo, 241, 275.
Rhythm, 149 *et seq.*; Darwin on, footnote, 222; in the dance, 207, 222 *et seq.*; in Grecian music, 301; in personal decoration, 106; in poetry, 235; in primitive music, 284, 286, 288, 295, 301.
Rougeing, 108.

Samoans, footnote, 44.
Sandwich Islanders, position in the scale of culture, 33.
Scarification, 54, 69 *et seq.*; found only among dark peoples, 78; significance of, 72 *et seq.*
Scherer, on the dance, 220.
Schopenhauer, art of, 316; quoted on music, 279.
Schuermann, on mourning colours, 57.
Sculpture, social influence of, 313.
Schurtz, quoted on origin of dress, 96.
Schussenquelle, footnote, 63.
Science of art, aim of, 2 *et seq*; Hennequin's contribution to, 14; hindrances to development of, 18 *et seq.*; studied by ethnological method, 19 *et seq.*; way to, 9 *et seq.*
Semper, Gottfried, on artistic style, 160.
Shakespeare, 10.
Shaman masks, 201.
Shamans, 191.
Shame, feeling of, origin of, 93 *et seq.*, 99.
Shells, as ornaments, 105.
Shillooks, footnote, 60.
Smyth, Brough, on Australian property marks, 139; on corroborries, 208 *et seq.*; on the Australians, 55, 56, 57, 65, 69, 70, 77, 83, 84, 88, 89, 93, 95, 96, 118, 174, 175, 177, 300, footnotes, 63, 66, 67, 75, 143; quoted on the Australians, 123, 125, 135, 159, 172, 177, 178, 220 *et seq.*, 253, footnote, 110.
Social organization, importance of art to, 313 *et seq.*
Sociology, of art, 12, 13, 18; relation of, to archæology, 22.
Somatology, not important to study of art, 34.
Songs, of primitive peoples, 282 *et seq.*
Songs of satire, 246.
Soudan, negroes of, 33.
Spencer, Herbert, an Australian song from, 237; on music, 281, 292; on primitive poetry, 234; on rhythm, 223; on social significance of dress, 114.
Stokes, on Australian songs, 276; quoted on Australian paintings, 170 *et seq.*
Stolpe, Hjalmar, on geometrical ornamentation, 121; referred to, footnote, 158.
Stories, spread of, 264 *et seq.*
Symmetry, in personal decoration, 106.

Tahitians, footnote, 43.
Taine, ethnological method in study of art, 19; on climate and art, 311; on race and art, 309 *et seq.*; on sociological art, 13 *et seq.*
Taine's Philosophy of Art, 16.
Taplin, an Australian song from, 236.
Tasmanians, footnote, 43; body painting among, 57; corroborries of, 211; decoration with flowers by, footnote, 156; hair-dressing among, 87;

loins dress of, 96; ornaments worn by, 93; paintings of, 178; purpose of decoration among, 111; scarification among, 71; tattooing among, 74; use of shell ornaments by, 105.
Taste, in body decoration, 77; influence of, on art, 15 *et seq.*
Tattooing, 54, 69; found only among the fairer peoples, 78.
Tchuktchis, carvings of, 200; culture of, 44; drawings of, 185, 186.
Technic ornament, origin of, 145.
Technique, a source of ornament, 130.
Textile art, a source of ornament, 130 *et seq.*; connection with ornamentation, 157.
Thayingen, excavations at, footnote, 164.
Thomas, on corroborries, 208 *et seq.*; quoted on the Australians, 56.
Tongans, footnote, 43, 44.
Torres Strait, 70.
Traditions, relation to epic poems, 251 *et seq.*
Transvaal, 181.
Tribal marks, 139 *et seq.*; hair-dressing as, 85; lip and ear plugs as, 82; made by scarifications, 74, 77, 80.
Tschuktschis (*see* Tchuktchis).
Tuaregs, footnote, 44.
Tulbagh Kloof, 181.
Tylor, E. B., quoted on music, 296.

Veddahs, culture of, 44; footnote, 43.
Virchow, on tattooing among the Bushmen, 79.
Wachandi, 220.
Waitz, use of term "Naturvölker," 33.
Waitz-Gerland, on clothing, 97; on significance of scarification, 72 *et seq.*; on the Australians, 56, 57, 70 *et seq.*; quoted on Australian languages, 274; on Australian musical instruments, 290; on Australian songs, footnote, 250; on colours used by the Australians, footnote, 63; on dances of the Australians, 229; on drawings of the Australians, 172, 174, footnote, 179; on memory of the Australians, 196; on poetry of the Australians, 248; on the Australians and Fuegians, 112.
Wake, on the Australians, 165.
War dances, 219.
Westermarck, footnote, 44; quoted on love, 245; wearing of clothing, 98.
White, a colour used in decoration, 133.
Wied, Prince of, on a Botocudo headdress, 90; on Botocudo dances, 216; on the Botocudo, 68, 81, 92; quoted on the Botocudo, 60, 283.
Wilhelmi, on scarification among Australians, 76; quoted on the Australians, footnote, 66.

Xingu tribes, ornamentation of, 120.

Yahgans, dances of, 216; dramas of, footnote, 268.
Yarra tribe, grave tablet from, 177.
Yellow, colour used in body painting, 63.

Zulus, position in the scale of culture, 33.

THE END.

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